

THE COMMONWEAL

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THE SALVAGE OF DESTITUTION

SINCE the war brought its tremendous revelation of crowds, we have also arrived at a clearer vision of the individual lost in the crowd. The great agencies of service which cared for young men suddenly cut adrift from normal living revealed the sharp, abiding need for human reclamation of many sorts. And so the comparatively vast attention now given to social welfare is simply one result of our awakening to the inchoate and starveling world in which we move.

Readers of such books as Elizabeth Macadam's *The Equipment of the Social Worker* will be impressed, above all, by the present extensive effort to train competent persons for the study and relief of human wastage. Universities and colleges have taken up earnestly what used to be a kind of educational forlorn hope. It is natural and imperative, also, that the Catholic Church, whose mission has been identified so largely with urban districts, should try to put its own corps of workers into the social field. And so during the past month a very special effort has been made to solidify and enlarge the greatest Catholic undertaking of this character to date—the National Catholic School of Social Service. Because this school is directly under episcopal care, and because it has

proved its worth, there is no need of laudatory emphasis upon the campaign for funds now being planned. This campaign will succeed.

But the tasks which beckon to social workers, and the grim evils indifference suffers to run riot in the community are still remote from the public mind. We can all understand the plight of misery. No people is more generous than ours in supporting those works of charity which Lincoln summed up in the close of his second inaugural: we aid the widow and the orphan, we bind up the nation's wounds, we forget the malice that festered in our souls. The image of distress, once seen, rouses the American heart to spontaneous pity. And yet there are many less glamorous pageants of destitution which pass almost unseen. Where, for instance, is our understanding for the evil of industrial maladjustment—the evil, ingrained in our shifting national existence, of men and women who drift headlong into employment for which they are wholly unsuited and the drudgery of which unnerves them? Nor are we more than partially aware of the immense toll gathered by that almost unrealizable thing, loneliness. City life is innately centrifugal. It disintegrates into human particles, and when the fractionizing is carried sufficiently far thousands of men

and women are left to smother their instincts under that pall which the old Greek sage offered only to beasts and the gods—the pall of solitude.

Modern medicine knows the price which society pays for the spiritual dessication of its members. Time was when under the spell of "progress" we believed mankind capable of transmutation into a type more resplendent than Apollo; but now the old truth that growth toward perfection is possible only as far as the inherited psycho-physical bow can be drawn, and that persistent failure to draw it will mean, in the end, decay of the fibre and a permanent slackening, is asserted by the competent masters of therapeutics. Much that passes for immorality and crime is simply degradation. Much of degradation is imposed by ruthless environment. These facts have long since been proclaimed by the philosophia perennis. "First of Christian social principles is the sacredness of personality," rightly says the Anglican Bishop of Manchester. Whatever distorts that personality, whatever deprives it of a normal chance to create its own satisfying image of the world, is negative and harmful, is criminal when its causes are not cataclysmic. The greatest servant of personality is, of course, faith, because only this reveals the fundamental, life-giving society of the world. There is an immense, tender, inimitable friendliness in the communion of the blessed. And that is one reason why—though it is only one reason—the ministry of the Church is a guarantee of social welfare.

Obviously, it is not immediately easy to affiliate the trained social worker with this ministry. Many good and charitable people resent, in fact, the scientifically-phrased ambitions of the trim young women secured to establish a settlement or a clinic. These sometimes seem dangerous meddlers, worthy even of official anathemas. A unit of action so traditional and well established as the parish will not always brook what appears to be a decentralization of energy. But however deeply sentiment may embroil the question, there can be no doubt that the social worker has a place of his or her own inside the operative body of the Church. The matter has recently been threshed out in Germany; and no comment we could offer on it would have the judicious appeal of these paragraphs by Dr. Karl Neundorfer, contributed to a recent issue of *Hochland*: "The Church and organized charity certainly belong together, but the union between them imposes definite distinctions. It is a union that can be misunderstood and wrongly used. Merely to subordinate social welfare-work to the missionary activities of the Church might well result in a habit of supporting only those among whom one expects to attain missionary success, and sometimes also those agents who, professionally considered, are inefficient. This form of 'welfare' would obviously not fulfil the Divine commandment of love. A mission would cease to be truly Christian the moment it used the plight of the

poor as a lever for pushing them into a confession.

"True welfare work will be the spontaneous expression of the religious life of the Church. This is clearly the way in which the early Christians understood it, as we read of them in the history of the Apostles. Of course they were missionaries and Saint Luke happily announced the growth of the communion of the faithful. But in spreading the faith they used 'words and signs,' not alms. Indeed they felt that this growth was less their own work than it was the achievement of the Lord. It was because they believed that they could not help being charitable. Their welfare work was therefore, in its disinterestedness, the perfect reflection of the spirit of Christ. For in several places He ordained charity for its own sake, without regard for the recipients or the possible missionary result; and in open contradiction of the opinions of His disciples He commanded that good be done even to those not among His followers.

"For these reasons we must, speaking for abiding Christian principles, advocate the independence of social welfare effort. The carrying-out of this effort must be consigned to a separate agency within the Church. Naturally enough, it will be subject to the episcopacy as are all other religious endeavors, because the bishop is not merely a priest and teacher but also a father. Wherever the work is done on a smaller scale it may likewise come under the jurisdiction of the pastor. But in so far as especial forms of service in the name of religion develop, the progressive self-government of the social worker is desirable. This is fully in accord with the practice of the early Church. Already the Apostles separated 'the preparation of the tables' from 'prayer and preaching,' giving over the first service to some who had been especially appointed; and Saint Paul speaks of the 'body of Christ' as divided into many organs, among which there are some for 'healing the sick and giving aid.'"

It seems indubitable that in the future, whenever the necessity for service such as that which was rendered to the man who fell among robbers reappears, Christian charity will give its all to succor and heal. This service can no longer be merely individual. The plain fact that we live dependent upon the taut and intricately coördinated mechanisms of industrial society makes the study of general conditions imperative. But the fruits of such study will continue to be most abundant when they are reaped by charity. In a social contingency like the recent British industrial strike, for instance, there may be questions of right and wrong, considerations of relative expediency. "Life," as Carlyle said, "is compassed round with necessity; yet is the meaning of life itself no other than freedom; thus have we a warfare." There can never be, however, any honest doubt of the burden to be borne by charity, which is both the greatest glory of the soul and the most necessary traffic law of the state.

THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

INSOFAR as the front page in the press registers American consciousness, the great strike in Britain is by now a dead issue, and comment up it becomes an anti-climax. It is neither too late, nor too early, however, to take account of certain outstanding facts that it has put in new and startling prominence and which no social prophet, when he takes sufficient heart to forecast the future afresh, can ignore nor evade. The first is the amazing protection which all governments actually in power possess over the vital points in the social armature, and the immense authority they acquire, quite irrespective of their political merits or popularity with the nation when such an accident as happened three weeks ago makes them the depositories for law and order. The sheer need of carrying on the complicated economic structure is so imperative, that a threat to it will always find all the stable and static elements in a nation ranged upon the side of the status quo. So long as these counterbalance the restless and unstable masses for whom change at any cost is welcome, for just so long, it seems, will any nation be secure from violent economic subversion. And in order that this be so, it is by no means necessary that they be numerically preponderant. The structure which modern society has reared is by now so much weightier and more powerful than those who built it, the living "city" (to use the old patristic term) so insignificant beside the dead and insensitive machine, that all any government in any social crisis need ask is for sufficient hands to operate it, and whatever degree of inconvenience the rebels may inflict, its ultimate triumph is assured in advance.

WHEN this has been said, however, it is by no means certain that all has been said. Nations die all manner of deaths. Marasmus can kill no less surely and not less fatally than apoplexy. No doubt there are many in England today, including a large proportion of the "young men in plus-fours" of whom our press correspondents seemed unable to rid their vision, who share the confidence of that slick and sinister figure, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and interim editor of the egregious British Gazette. With him, they see, in the collapse of a spasmodic movement of revolt under the weight of public opinion, only a "surrender" which may well be made the jumping-off ground for new and unheard-of measures of social discipline. But these are not the best minds nor the minds whose opinions thoughtful well-wishers to Britain in this country would be proud to share. For them the late strike will present itself, not so much as a victory, even inconclusive, for either side, as a warning, perhaps the most dramatic and comprehensive a nation has ever received, to set its social house well in order while there is still time.

NO subsequent developments will overpower the impression the world has received that behind the impressive and orderly façade of British administration, there exist two irreconcilable elements pledged to a stubborn resistance whenever their interests clash, and that the imposing imperial structure which prosperity reared seems to be, for its perpetuation, singularly at the mercy of a prosperity which the future cannot guarantee. Ruskin has remarked that there is no surer symptom of national decline than contentment with treating symptoms as they arise and a disinclination to get at the root of the distemper. Britain's problem is the poverty into which its masses have been permitted to drift, and the discovery that a general strike is a sword of lath and tinfoil against it, leaves the dilemma with all its old urgency intact.

ULSTER must be a pleasant province for the civilized man to live in! Like the famous inhabitants of the Falkland Islands, who were reported to be "eking out a precarious livelihood by taking in one another's washing," the inhabitants of the six counties seem to be keeping what intellectual life is in them intact by breathing in the sour air of one another's prejudices. A bill passed without any difficulty in the Imperial Parliament, which tardily removes some of the disabilities that have weighed upon Catholics since the days of Titus Oates, has just been rejected by the unlovely and forbidding body sitting at Belfast which was whelped by the Mother of Parliaments four years ago, and which seems to bring to its sessions the political wisdom of an exalted cyclops of the Ku Klux Klan. Comment upon the successive exhibitions of bigotry and obscurantism, offered by the Northern Irish gov-

ernment whenever an opportunity is given it to justify the political indulgence or weakness which allowed it to contract itself out of the general Irish settlement, is of little advantage. The contrast with the Free State, where no disabilities of any sort press upon Protestants, even in districts where they form an inconsiderable minority, speaks for itself. What many prophesied when the protection that imperial control gave Catholics in Ulster was withdrawn, has not been long in happening. The Orangeman is "going native."

THE world of northern night still retains its mysteries, which an antique poet might have visioned in a veil of icy storms rushing over infinite waters white with cold. Modern men have been given a different and even a more beautiful image—of Amundsen's ship, the *Norge*, lost in the silence of frigid mists and climbing over a realm unseen before. The great, quivering bulk of the air-vessel, obedient to the will and imaginative reason of those who guided it, might almost serve for a symbol of the human spirit braving the tenebrous regions of truth unknown. For Amundsen, of course, the trip had the lure of scientific adventure; and there probably came to him, for the third or fourth time in his career, the thought that he was accomplishing, in a tired and very learned age, the same thing that men of his blood had done when Leif Ericson captained a Viking crew. The mechanical trappings, even the "proof of the commercial value of aeronautics" so widely heralded, are of secondary importance here. From the practical point of view, the results obtained by this voyage into the north are negligible. Man could not live in that glacial air, and the instruments of commercial engineering could never exploit the possible treasured riches of arctic soil. Amundsen appears rather as the romantic servant of the imagination, offering a symbol of eager search through darkness, and exemplifying the old illusion of bravery to a world of disillusioned men.

COMMANDER BYRD'S achievement likewise encourages speculative vision. This American, first to reach the pole through the air in a manner long since imagined by Kipling, operated with the same despatch and vigor which his countrymen have admired in such typical lives as that of Roosevelt and in such legends as those which surround Stuart and Daniel Boone. The gesture of conquest—planting the flag—was in this instance merely figurative, but we all rejoice at its being done, feeling that the privilege came as a kind of right to a nation of pioneers. It will be a sorry day on which we lose all our relish of the frontiers. The last American might very well be he who, reading of a sturdy venture across the barriers of distance, failed to thrill at the news or to ransack his knowledge of geography for a glimpse of the setting. Balboa, "silent upon a peak in Darien," is no more suggestive a figure than is the first American aviator,

huddled above the waving plumes of his craft, looking down upon the mysterious zenith of the earth and greeting its stark emptiness with a shout of joy.

"THE social mission of charity" is expressed practically, for Catholics in the United States, in the program of the Social Service School, Washington, D. C. This endeavor to train young women for the difficult tasks of human reclamation began, of course, by groping its way through impediments of various sorts. Nobody knew if a competent faculty could be established; if the right kind of women could be found for a work that is burdensome and sacrificial; and if, once the years of training had ended, places for the graduates could be obtained. Today none of these questions needs an answer. The School has replied to all of them through a record of achievement which, to those who have been permitted to examine it, seems one of the great glories of organized religion in America. While the course of training includes a substantial introduction into the modern sciences of sociology, economics, and psychiatry, it affords abundant opportunity for experience in the field of social action. The students, chosen from among the best of college graduates, see poverty and social disease at first hand: they learn to wrestle with error and despondency, and they take it upon themselves to solve individual problems as these are presented in infinite variety among the destitute. From personal experience we know that the School transforms young women from persons ignorant of even the rudiments of social work into leaders whose energy, skill, and devotion can be depended upon to bring that charity, upon which the Apostle set so high a value, into direct relation with modern life.

THE one great need of the School is an endowment adequate to perpetuate its work. During its experimental years financial assistance was supplied by the administrative committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, in the hope of calling into being a sorely needed institutionalized endeavor. Now, at the proper moment, representative officials of the Council of Women have taken a direct interest in the work and have organized a campaign in its behalf. The plan calls for raising a fund of \$600,000 before the end of June; and the directors, together with the committee of 100 prominent citizens appointed to aid the "drive," hope that it will be possible to announce a real success at the sixth annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women, to be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, during the week of October 10. An undertaking so worthy of support will appeal to many as a splendid opportunity for generosity.

IN an appeal made on behalf of the Seamen's Church Institute, words were used that should make the Catholics of New York City think. The Church that

it is connected with is, of course, Protestant—although there is no doubt that “the institute serves the men who roam the seven seas without regard to race, creed, or color.” More ships and more seamen enter the port of New York yearly than any other port in the world. “Twenty-five years ago,” says the appeal, “this port was known as the worst for the treatment given to seamen. Today, largely because of the efforts of the Seamen’s Church Institute, New York is the most friendly port in the world.” It is far from our desire to take anything away from an appeal on behalf of a service that is entirely worthy. But we should like Catholics, and the Catholics of New York especially, to examine their social consciences in the light of the work of the Seamen’s Church Institute.

LIVING in the greatest port in the world, they have done extraordinarily little for the Catholic seamen who come ashore here for a night, or two nights, or a week—sailors, firemen, stewards, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Irish, German. Many of these roamers of the seven seas would like to stay at a home where their desire to go to Mass and attend to their religious duties could be easily fulfilled. It is true that there is a Catholic Sailors’ Home near the docks; it is small, and the accommodation and entertainment that it is able to provide is scanty. Many of the Catholic seamen who go into it and who appreciate the service it gives, have often asked why New York—or Boston, for that matter—has not been able to provide an institute for Catholic seamen comparable to the splendid institute that Montreal has provided. Perhaps the Knights of Columbus will find it in their province to provide such. Meanwhile, the Seamen’s Church Institute has nightly been turning away hundreds of men for whom it has no room. We may take it for granted that a percentage, and not a small percentage, of these men are Catholics, who would like to be able to go into a place where they could not only have rest and entertainment, but also where Catholic devotions would not be out of the way.

THE words of Cardinal Hayes in his address to the Catholic Actors’ Guild on realism in art and its failure to be real, will strike a responsive chord in many minds whose preoccupations are far from being religious ones. The superstition that the public demands a happy ending to its dramatic fare is old, but untenable. Many plays of a gloom and tragedy quite unrelieved, have won its favor in recent years. One of the present season’s outstanding successes ends with murder and madness—the last crowned, like Ophelia’s, with flowers and bridal veil. But what does seem to be true is that the theatregoing public revolts against the chastened happiness which life, in its own last acts, so frequently offers. Its cry seems to be: “A whole loaf, or no bread at all.” The gruel may be thick or

bitter. But it demands that it be, at least, “thick and slab,” thinned down by none of the compromises that are the daily fare of life. And, whatever be the dramatic value of so arbitrary a presentation, there can be no doubt that, even artistically, the Cardinal is defining the point at which realism departs from reality when he complains that realism “portrays, on the one side, all the luridness and despair, but never, for a moment, presents the other side of the picture—which is that, into that very mire, mud and dirt, the Lord Himself, the Saviour of mankind, is ready to walk to lay the hand of benediction on life’s miserable things.”

OF course, such words, uttered by one who is a priest of the Church as well as a prince, will be dismissed in many quarters as an “ex officio” pronouncement—as something that the Cardinal simply “had to say.” But they reëcho so much that sober thinkers in all departments of criticism are saying and thinking as to deserve a less cavalier reception. The crying fault of realism is that it is taking its revenge too thoroughly on the suppressions and inhibitions of a past generation for art not to suffer. A revolt in itself, it is concerning itself too exclusively with minds and hearts that are in revolt. The function that duty and will power play in the hour of temptation, seems to be beyond the compass of its art, and it evades them by what are really the crudest of devices. In its desire to avoid anything like anti-climax (as though anti-climax were not pretty nearly the norm of life) it often resorts to a banality in tragedy as bad—that is, as bad artistically—as the most contrived of old-fashioned happy endings. In its anxiety to steer as closely as decency permits to the confines of the permissible, it succeeds, again and again, in being improbable. Repentance, especially—even in its hapless form of remorse—seems to elude it. There are none of the suspensions, the “returns,” to use a French phrase, which experience of the real notes, in the rectilinear workings-out of its evil providences. The defenses, which a civilized society has learned how to erect against the extreme chances of fate, are excluded from its calculations. And as a result, the contemporary stage is growing less and less civilized. Realism in its essence is nothing but a method of presenting life’s realities, and everything that is real has a right to its consideration. By making it merely a synonym for the darker and cruder side of human nature, our bepudded social surgeons who claim it as their category may gain a reputation for “courage” and for the disillusionment that is hailed as wisdom by readers and audiences who think with the superficialities of their brains. But they are discharging very unfaithfully their Hippocratic oath.

THE Mediaeval Academy of America offers satisfactory evidence of progress in the second number of *Speculum*, its official quarterly pronunciamento. There is a rare mingling of diversified scholarship with orig-

inal thought and pointed phrase. Most interesting, possibly, is the constant indication of assistance received by scholars from men able to defray the financial cost of manuscript explorations. Writing to explain his conclusions concerning the date of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Mr. Alton Griscom pays the following well-deserved tribute: "Lord Harlech, of Brogyntyn, Oswestry, Shropshire, was so exceedingly kind and generous as to lend his manuscript, a very rare one never before described, to me for examination and collation, sending it across the Atlantic through the courtesy of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, who personally assumed responsibility for it and deposited it in his New York library. It would be difficult to parallel such an instance of consideration for scholars and the cause of scholarship, and there are many besides the present writer who would wish to express their grateful appreciation of so signal an act of generosity." We assume, however, that Mr. Griscom is well aware of how many other benefactions of the same character might be chronicled. In ever so many places the imitation of Maecenas is generously undertaken; and we believe that it may be taken as a pledge of much else to be accomplished by American industry in the service of traditional civilization.

THE Newman School, one of the most interesting of modern Catholic educational foundations, completed another stage of its development when a new gymnasium was dedicated under impressive circumstances to which the apostolic benediction of the Holy Father added a benignant dignity. Senator George H. Moses, of New Hampshire, found the right words to say upon the occasion. We can quote only a little of much that deserves quotation: "The feverishness with which intercollegiate and interscholastic sports are pursued is one of the stigmata of our age. These are great and spectacular social events. Their reactions are as varied as the minds of those who witness them; and public comment upon them, as found in the newspapers, runs so largely into the terms of our age, such as numbers, money, and fashion, that I sometimes wonder whether we are not distorting the perspective and setting up false standards by which to judge the rising generation. No wonderment of this sort comes upon me here; for I realize that the founders of this school had in their minds an ideal which they are constantly developing and in which the correct proportion of those things which enter into the training of boyhood is to be constantly maintained. The great name which you bear is the finest evidence of this belief of mine, because the saintly Prince of the Church in whose presence these boys move daily knew always, whether he was on the cricket field of Eton, on the waters of the Isis at Oxford, climbing among the hills of Capri, or even in the solemn precincts of the Sistine, that there must be room for the

development of the physical as well as of the intellectual powers of the human personality."

MR. ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN, widely beloved as a charming essayist, contributes to a recent number of the *Dalhousie Review* a defense of marital love. It might be better, of course, to say that it is really a toast to a thing that has never been vanquished—a memorial to what, regardless of the hollow wit of Anita Loos and her ilk, is the eternal conqueror. Mr. MacMechan speaks, as a poet would, with examples: "How the world regarded Dr. Johnson's wedded devotion is admirably expressed by that typical Englishman, Thomas Babington Macaulay: 'To ordinary spectators, the lady appeared to be a short, fat, coarse woman painted an inch thick, dressed in gaudy colors. . . . To Johnson, however . . . his Titty, as he called her, was the most beautiful, graceful, and accomplished of her sex. . . . The lover continued to be under the illusions of the wedding day, till the lady died in her sixty-fourth year.' I pity the reader who can laugh at that passage. . . . Goëthe once said: 'Whom God deceives is deceived of his own weal.' Could a man be more blessedly deceived than in preserving the illusions of his wedding day until the dying day? That Johnson remained the bridegroom throughout life, reveals his essential nobility; that he was always blind to the patent faults of his wife is a compliment to womanhood." Perhaps the explanation of Johnson's—and all similar—illusions is simpler than it seems. After all, a noble man wishes to wed nobility; and if he succeeds, no amount of misunderstanding by the outer world will drive him to relinquish his treasure.

THE MISSIONARY AND MAN

IT is quite possible that restriction of immigration to the United States may very soon and very tangibly prove to be a measure advantageous to the Church in America by affording a much needed breathing spell in which to coördinate and consolidate advances in certain activities. Every resource in the past fifty years has been strained to the uttermost to care for the immediate needs of new incomers. Though these brought with them the great religious foundations, their needs frequently meant a disadvantage to those who had already found their place in our growing community and whose needs were not altogether the same.

The time is ripe for America, for the two continents of America, to make real and important contributions to the Church general. Among the great forces which are beginning to make themselves felt in that direction there are two of especial importance: the Catholic University of America and the American Catholic Foreign Missions Society of Maryknoll-on-the-Hudson—both of which are doing signal work.

The second is a powerful addition to the work which lies so near the heart of the Holy Father, bringing fresh vigor to a world-wide effort; the former, a university in the true sense (inasmuch as it is not a college, but a large group of colleges guided by men and women studying and teaching along differing lines of experience from the same fundamental principles) has in it the seed of a clearing house of the practical knowledge accumulated by different orders and religious or Catholic lay bodies and by individuals in the two Americas and Europe such as is not and cannot well be offered anywhere else.

The Catholic University can become a focal point of inestimable importance to Christian civilization. That the University is keenly alive to this opportunity is evidenced constantly. Most recent movements of importance are the drawing to the University of a Benedictine foundation from Downside, Ampleforth, and Fort Augustus, coöperation in the foundation of the Mediaeval Academy of America, which is considered "to be one of the most significant steps toward the history of culture the United States has seen," and now the first meeting of the Catholic Anthropological Conference, planned by Reverend Leopold J. Tibesar of Maryknoll and Dr. John Montgomery Cooper, of the University.

Twenty-six delegates to this meeting discussed, as a preliminary to organization, ethnological training for candidates to the missions and the promotion of ethnological research and publication by Catholic missionaries along the lines so greatly encouraged by the Pope in *Anthropos* (the notable Catholic review published in Vienna) in the new ethnological museum in Rome, and the Milan University conferences.

There is no doubt of the value of these two objectives to anyone who has spent much time in mission countries with any interest in mission work. Most of the "hardships" of the new missionary arise out of utter ignorance and inexperience. His first years in the field are often spent in laboriously acquiring the elements of the problems of living; in the process he is too often handicapped in sympathetic understanding of the people with whom his mission lies, sometimes with lasting prejudice to his personal efficiency. In the orders, in scattered and isolated missions, in private hands, and in cellars and in attics there is a vast wealth of literature; in the rapidly disappearing pioneer missionaries, practically cut off as many of them have been, for half a century from the outside world, there is invaluable knowledge of scientific value and of incalculable importance to the primary object of mission work.

It is to be hoped that this new activity will draw to it all who have anything whatever of knowledge and experience to contribute. It is true that the missionary lives in most intimate contact with his people, far more intimate than are most parish contacts at home; it is true also that in the past he has lived, and in cases

(growing daily fewer with increased facility of communication and transportation) still lives in out-of-the-way places to which travelers and scientific investigators rarely penetrate. Nevertheless, there are many who are not missionaries or priests who have penetrated as far, for business or for pleasure or scientific interest, or who even have administered the affairs of the people among whom the missionary's work lies; who have governed these peoples, with intimate knowledge of them from quite other angles. It may be a surprise to some to learn that there are not a few such men in America, for we have not thought much of these matters. All this is valuable to this new movement, and, if a suggestion is in order at the moment of its organization, should be utilized as it is being utilized in Europe. From the very beginning all of America should be drawn in and utilized, not merely the United States.

LOGICAL MEXICO

THE Mexican government is acting true to form. Having consistently broken its word, as has been revealed again by the publication of the Vatican correspondence relative to the appointment of the apostolic delegate, the Calles potentates are certainly not doing anything unexpected in carrying out the campaign of forcible repression which has followed the publication of the Mexican bishops' pastoral letter. It is difficult to restrain one's feelings before the harrowing spectacle of this repression. Those whose faith in Providence is strong may find consolation in these words of the great Newman: "The truth remains that the strength of the Church, as heretofore, does not lie in earthly law, or human countenance, or civil station, but in her proper gifts: in those great gifts—Blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, the persecuted."

But even these, having read the summary of the diplomatic relations between the United States government and Mexican officials during 1921, when there was talk of a treaty to be signed by the two countries, will see clearly that the grim violence of the present was coolly planned long in advance. Then our government did insist that "the citizens of each of the high contracting parties shall not be disturbed, molested, nor annoyed in any manner, on account of their religious belief." Obviously, the State Department had still fresh in mind the investigations conducted before the Senate Committee in 1919 and 1920, reference to which has previously been made in *The Commonwealth*. The Mexican Foreign Office, however, in the person of Señor Pani, objected to this provision on the ground of "legal reasons which preclude the Mexican government's acceptance of this stipulation." And gradually a matter of so much moment to both peoples, and to their common civilization, was suffered to fade from view and become almost forgotten.

With two immediate results of this failure to achieve the realization of an American principle we, as a people, are now concerned. The first is the expulsion from Mexico of Monsignor Caruana, the newly appointed apostolic delegate and an American citizen. In vain did the State Department and the American ambassador try to influence the Calles entourage toward adopting a policy less disparaging of the national honor and less scornful of public opinion. Similarly, the British minister was powerless to prevent the expulsion of Dean Peacock, who had even signed an agreement not to preach in Mexico; and it has been announced officially that the exile of all Protestant ministers is to follow at once. The forced exodus of Methodist and allied clergymen has already begun. These facts, together with others which might be mentioned, ought at least to have the salutary effect of silencing a variety of propagandist who has forced himself upon a national consciousness that would preferably be attentive to almost everything else.

As a general rule this person has been attached, more or less professionally, to that wing of the Protestant church which good men like Dr. S. Parkes Cadman are powerless to clip. An illuminating example is Bishop George A. Miller, speaker about Mexico on a variety of platforms, and author of a summary of his views which appeared under the title, *Is There Religious Persecution in Mexico?*, in a recent issue of the *Christian Century*. His importance lies in the fact that he is a case in point; and as such we purpose to deal with him, realizing full well that we might adjoin a dozen names equally savory.

Bishop Miller is in charge of Methodist work in Mexico and Central America. He is represented very well, we believe, by the title if not the contents of a book published as *Prowling About Panama*. Latin America is faced with many serious problems, not the least of which is providing scope for the Brobdingnagian mental snoopings of men like Bishop Miller. By way of illustrating these, we offer the following excerpts from his article, with footnotes of our own. "Only a visit to Mexico and first-hand sight of the unbelievable array of churches on every knoll, by every road, in open fields, by running streams, on every street and often so close together that one joins another, can give one even a faint idea of the extent to which the Roman hand was upon everything. . . . Claiming always to be above kingdoms and thrones, the Pope steadfastly refused allegiance to any temporal powers and assumed to dictate the policies of the state and control international relations. One more twist of the screw and Rome would have taken over by force the government of the country; she already had most of the revenue."

The mountains of irony conjured up by this vision are too great for man to compass. Although we are relatively sure that small patches of land are still

available for cultivation between church doors in Mexico, we can't help wondering if it was really the absence of arable acres which troubled the Bishop. We have a suspicion that his business was to foster, on his own hook, a little further ecclesiastical architecture. There must have been moments, at least, when he looked about hopefully for a site. We really do not begrudge him this ambition; but it ought not to have turned his color scheme into solid green. As for the horrible purposes of Rome, the standing armies of which were doubtless drilling daily for the new conquest of Tamaulipas, one marvels at their supineness since the opening of the nineteenth century. Nothing is more ridiculous, because nothing is so preposterously impossible, than the supposed machinations of Rome for the control of political affairs. It would be an excellent idea for many Americans to familiarize themselves with the concordats recently arrived at between the Vatican and various governments, and to get a fleeting idea of the relations now being promoted between the Church and temporal powers. By expending a little effort in this way, many bogies could be slain and numerous nightmares avoided. We do not, however, recommend this effort to Bishop Miller. The mental strain, the devastating enlightenment, would probably be too much for him.

"Why," continues the Bishop with an interrogation, "should not any man do good in any land and under all circumstances? No one is objecting to the doing of good by anybody in Mexico. The point is that it is the principle and practice of the Roman hierarchy to control its constituents, not by the reasonableness of preaching nor the enlightenment of education, but through the magic of the Mass, the spell of the confessional, and the hocus-pocus of transferred merits and Purgatory remittances, peddled out by expert ecclesiastical salesmen." The Bishop, you see, does not object to a Catholic doing good. He merely declares that a Catholic cannot do good, thereby making a treasurable distinction. His whole point is, there will be no religious persecution in Mexico so long as only Catholics are its victims. While the "reasonableness of preaching" is suffered to continue, why should any American worry about the Kingdom of Christ south of the Rio Grande?

Well, the notable logic of Calles has settled the point. The warfare against Christian teaching which has become a first principle for a junta impregnated with revolutionary atheism, will not spare the few "reasonable preachers" who have been at such pains to distinguish between themselves and the religious belief of the great majority of the Mexican people. Perhaps the next few weeks will provide Bishop Miller with an opportunity to alter a few of his conclusions. These weeks will, however, add only customary expressions of brutality to the long litany of infamy with which the existing Mexican potentates have scourged the conscience of the world.

THE FALLACY OF CREDIT POWER

By HENRY SOMERVILLE

AMONG economists who are fettered in their thinking by orthodox training the Douglas credit scheme has the marks of an ephemeral new religion. Its disciples live by faith rather than understanding. The chief asset of the scheme has been its unintelligibility. Many well-known economists have frankly confessed, when asked their opinion of it, that they could not make head or tail of it. When propaganda of the scheme was at its zenith in England the present writer was secretary of the Catholic Social Guild and editor of a small Catholic publication devoted to social questions. I was bombarded with appeals from the most unexpected quarters, important and unimportant, to "take up" the scheme. On failing to do so I was accused with the "money interests" of "boycotting" the scheme.

The disciples of Major C. H. Douglas had the conviction of witnessing to a great new revelation. The shortest way of dealing with their importunities was to ask them if they understood the scheme. Without exception they said that they did not, but they knew somebody that did! Two or three years ago I wrote an article on the control of credit and currency for a leading Catholic review. The article contained a few remarks about the Douglas credit scheme and I mentioned my experience of finding that its believers disclaimed understanding of it. In sending the ms. to the editor I told him that the remarks about the Douglas scheme could be omitted from the article as they were of no importance. The editor, in returning me the proofs, said the article needed shortening on account of space but that I was to leave in my animadversions on the Douglas scheme. His reason was that he had just been talking to a priest in a high ecclesiastical position who had been warmly advocating the scheme and then admitted that he did not understand it!

The literature of social credit abounds in irrelevancies and "non sequiturs." Defects and anomalies, real and unreal, are alleged against the existing system and then there is an agile jump to the conclusion that money is the root of all the evil, though not in the sense meant by Saint Paul. Mr. Robert Rodger introduces his exposition of the Douglas doctrine by saying that in the middle-ages the principle of the "just price" prevailed, and the period was the golden age of labor, and "the Church, meanwhile, was at her zenith, and there is something salutary in the thought that a falling back on first principles might restore something of religion's lost prestige with the masses." Any reader who labors through social credit literature, perhaps with a wet towel round his fevered brow, will appreciate the humor of the suggestion that from its "first principles" may come a religious revival.

Before Mr. Rodger enters upon any argument he makes a number of remarkable assertions which have an impressiveness because of their mixture of audacity and ambiguity. "Our industrial system exists to deliver money, not goods." If this means that we are no longer in the stage of barter it is a truism. If it means that money is valued except as a means of getting goods it is contrary to what everybody knows to be fact. "Credit, the life blood of society, is a monopoly of the financier." It would be equally significant to affirm, with all due solemnity, that railways, the arteries of society, are the monopoly of the railway owner. These asseverations are not argument: they only invite the cockney query: "Well, wot abaht it?"

Mr. Rodger comes to argument when he quotes Professor Thorold Rodgers as saying that in the fifteenth century the daily wage of an artisan was equivalent to a week's food. On the strength of this Mr. Rodger assumes that the artisan could live for a week on a day's wage, as if nothing was required for living except food. A present-day artisan, he continues, cannot live for a week on a day's wage in spite of the fact that the development of machine power has enormously increased our capacity to produce goods. One operative in charge of twenty-five machines can turn out 150 dozen pairs of stockings per day. I quote Mr. Rodger:

What applies to stockings has a general application, more or less, throughout other branches of production. If, then, our productive powers are so great, sixpence today should keep the artisan, other things being equal, not for a week only, but for something like a year. Other things, of course, have not remained equal; the factor of finance has intervened to rob the community of the benefits conferred by the scientist and the inventor. Operating through the agency of price, the financial system filches purchasing power from the community, so that life for the mass is never far removed from subsistence level.

The arithmetic in this quotation is obscure, but it will be enough to examine its logic and economics. Sixpence today buys less than formerly simply because money is cheaper; the price level has changed. Money wages have gone up as well as prices. The money wage of an American artisan today would have seemed large for a merchant prince in the middle-ages. The output of the operative with the twenty-five stocking machines does nothing to justify the inference that labor is now fifty times as productive as in the middle-ages. Productivity has not increased to such an extent even in stocking-making, for the labor employed in making and maintaining the twenty-five machines as well as that of the operative has to be counted in the cost. And productivity has not increased at anything

like the same rates for all commodities. Raw materials and foodstuffs are, in general, considering the size of the populations to be supplied and the distances to be traversed, harder and not easier to get nowadays than they were in the middle-ages.

In his next argument Mr. Rodger supposes that forgers produce and circulate bogus notes to the value of \$500,000. There would be consequent inflation. Prices would rise. The community loses \$500,000 of purchasing power in favor of the forgers. Supposing now, continues Mr. Rodger, the forgers produce \$500,000 of bogus notes and lend them to an honest manufacturer who spends them on a factory. The level of prices is again raised. The community, therefore, through the prices of the various commodities, has paid for the erection of the factory. The manufacturer has yet to pay back the forgers with interest for the loan of the bogus notes. Spread over ten years at 5 percent, he pays \$52,000 per annum. We continue with Mr. Rodger's own words:

Where is he going to get it? He must get it from the community! Besides the wages, salaries, profits, and other charges that he must put into the price of his products, he must also charge up this \$52,000 loan and interest charge in order to pay back the forgers. So the community has to pay twice. It paid for the building of the factory; it is now called upon to pay for it again (over a period of ten years) in the price of the product.

An orthodox economist would feel it necessary to make many qualifications to such a crude statement of the effects of an increased quantity of currency. For present purposes, however, it is unnecessary to make precisions. Let us grant that an increase of the currency by \$500,000 has an inflative effect and "the community" pays higher prices. But according to the argument a new factory is built which produces annually goods which yield wages, salaries, profits, and \$52,000 loan charges. There is a larger volume of business in the community to be financed. An increased stock of goods neutralizes the inflative effects of an increased quantity of currency. The increased supply of goods tends to lower prices. The community thus gets its own back! Mr. Rodger goes on to say:

When banks create and issue credits they produce the same economic effects as the forgers. By the issue of these credits the community has had to pay for a mass of plant and machinery valued in England alone at something like \$600,000,000. We have paid for it in a diluted purchasing power. Manufacturers have redeemed it, or are busy doing so, out of our payments for the goods they produce and which we buy. "Labor" produces not only consumable goods, but also the means to further production in the shape of plant and machinery. On a rough estimate it has been calculated that plant and machinery exceed consumable goods by a ratio of about four to one. If the price of this plant expansion is paid for in the price of consumable goods (the foregoing analysis shows that it is) is it to be wondered at that the

masses are still poor despite our enormous increase in wealth-producing capacity? With the expansion of the industrial machine the burden on the community grows.

It would be interesting to know the bases of the rough estimate that plant and machinery exceed consumable goods at the ratio of four to one. At any given moment this may be true because consumable goods are always coming in and going out of existence, but it would be more enlightening to compare annual output with plant and machinery.

It shows a complete misapprehension of the subject, moreover, to imagine that the same economic effects follow an increase of currency and a creation of credit. The importance of currency increase is much greater than that of credit increase to the same amount. A currency increase is permanent unless somebody bears the expense of withdrawing that currency and the expense of withdrawal is equal to the profit of issue, except for any gains that may be reckoned in the shape of interest. If the forgers withdrew their notes at the end of ten years they would have gained from their operations only the annual interest of 5 percent. Further, an increased currency makes possible the grant of increased credits by the banks. If an extra \$500,000 in notes were put into effective circulation the banks would increase their loans by several times that amount. The increase in purchasing power would thus be multiplied with proportionately greater inflative effects.

A creation of credit has much more limited effects than an increase of currency. In the first place, the effect is not permanent. When an operation has been financed by credit and the banker has been repaid, the credit is canceled. Purchasing power, temporarily increased, returns to its former level and there is no permanent effect on prices. Banks, as a rule, confine their credit issues to the financing of short trading operations so that the credits are self-liquidating. They lend to a manufacturer so that he can execute an order received for goods and he repays the bank when he is paid by his customer. The credit is then canceled. A bank would soon find itself in difficulties if it created credits which were turned into fixed capital like a factory. Fixed capital is properly provided for out of capital investments, not by credit creation.

In his first article, Mr. Rodger shows he makes a fallacious estimate of productivity, both potential and actual. The estimate that labor is nowadays fifty times as productive as it was before the industrial revolution has not a vestige of validity. Another fallacy of Mr. Rodger's here exposed is that he reckons the inflation caused by increased currency but he omits to reckon the opposite effect of increased output when new capital undertakings reach the producing stage. His third great mistake is to confound the very different effects of currency increase and credit creation. These are rather serious faults in what professes to be an analysis of the existing economic system.

THE CASE AGAINST MAURRAS

By ALPHONSE LUGAN

I MUST avow that without accepting in every detail the article by M. Jules Bois (French Catholicism: A New Era, The Commonweal, March 17) which I find lacking in certain necessary distinctions, and in which too many generalities are uttered, I find him justified in his general conclusions.

The article by Mr. A. I. du P. Coleman (Old Unhappy Far-off Things, The Commonweal, April 7) on the other hand, strikes me as sophomoric in the extreme (it is possible to be a child up to eighty years of age). The writer is full of excellent intentions: he is, possibly as the descendant of an ancient French family domiciled for generations in America, enamored of l'Action Française. He went to Paris, and, love being proverbially blind, he saw everything, including Catholicism, through the eyes of his Dulcinea, just as a Frenchman, fanatically nationalist and a visitor to the United States, might allow himself to view its problems through the spectacles of the Ku Klux Klan.

For these reasons (I say it with all due respect) Mr. Coleman remains ignorant of France, of her past and present alike. He will, no doubt, reply that he has read Maurras, Daudet, and Bainville, geniuses all three, as he fondly believes, in politics, criticism, and history. Now it happens that there are no three writers more ignorant than these three high priests of "scientific" monarchism. Save among a few tyros, such as exist in every province of knowledge, it would be hard to find elsewhere an equal fanaticism, an equal audacity in ignoring the whole truth, an equal determination to see only a few weak spots where their sophistries can find a lodgment.

Terrible and bloody-minded Procrustians, willing to hack and saw from the social and political body of France, legs, arms, heart, and even head, if only the amputated trunk may fit the torture-bed of their insensate logic! Abusing and thrusting aside all facts which do not square with their extravagant "a priori," they fasten upon negligible happenings of no importance in the mass of reality, and do them the honor of making them the basis of a truculent, overweening, and self-conceited doctrine, decorated with the pompous and futile title of "empirical organization." Their theory may be resumed in two apothems: Democracy can no more be reconciled with organization than a circle can be squared. Current morality has no place in politics.

Wherein does this violent prejudice, compact of geometry and lack of reality, differ from crass ignorance? To own no doubts—to neglect the total design and form—to ignore the multiple aspects of a problem—to reduce sociological and political com-

plexities to a few abstractions of a terrifying simplicity, is the mark of a sectary, often of the most third-rate order of intelligence—not of a true scientist.

Thanks to the trumpetings and team-work of a few charlatans, l'Action Française has attracted a vast audience around its side-show and has created many disciples to its own image, no less sectarian, no less victims of their mathematical formulae, no more accessible to reason and facts that do not jibe with the play they have set out to perform—in a word, no less ignorant.

Mr. Coleman speaks of the rally to the republic so greatly desired by Pope Leo XIII, and which he declares, on the rather surprising testimony of Abbé Ernest Dimnet, to have "failed lamentably." He has seen this rally through the eyes of Maurras, hence he has failed to comprehend it, or, if he has understood it at all, has insisted on denaturing it through sheer compression in the mould of his own mind. Democracy is a squared circle! Hence any effort at adaptation, no matter whence it comes, were it even through constitutional monarchy (Maurras has been no less violent toward constitutional monarchies than toward republics) is an essay in the direction of futility. Of this nature, we are allowed to infer, was the gesture of Pope Leo.

Now, to imagine that this great Pope, who in his private capacity and by sentiment was a monarchist, should have taken the pains to write an encyclical baldly ordering French Catholics to accept the republic, is childish. Leo XIII saw far and saw profoundly. He took note of the new conditions of modern societies. He saw the necessity for the Church to learn them, and, without any abdication, to adapt herself to them. He knew well (it is a distinguished American journalist, Mr. Morton Fullerton, who is my authority for the phrase) that the Church should attach herself to one dead body only—that which hung on the Cross. Before him, de Tocqueville had written that "Christianity was a living body, which must not be chained to any dead one." Here is the true reason for the intervention of the Pontiff in the political affairs of France, Spain, Portugal, and other countries. Here is the true inwardness of those immortal encyclicals which, one might say, put the changeless Gospel at the service of so many an impressive reality.

Those, however, who had some interest in binding the Church to their corpses, in France and elsewhere, quickly saw what a blow to their mortuary enterprises was contained in the encyclical. They rose as one man—silent, disdainful, or satiric, to avert the threat which was menacing their political enterprises. In France especially, where for a century and a half, and

often for the noblest of reasons (which should not be held against them) they had striven to associate this policy intimately with that of the Church, they either turned a deaf ear Romeward or openly resisted the instructions of the Pontiff. One has only to recall the opposition offered by such leaders as Paul de Cassagnac and Drumont, by such journals as *La Croix* (in somewhat seemlier fashion), and *l'Action Française*, from its first appearance about this time. By one means or another they contrived to kill *l'Action Libérale*, which the eminent writer M. Piou had created under the impulsion of Leo XIII, in order to realize the views of the Pope in the domain of common law. It is a puerile view of events to imagine that the famous rally was an isolated phenomenon, unconnected with the history of France since the Revolution and even before it, or that the movement has ceased with the alleged check attributed to it by Mr. Coleman. The rally was but one instant in a series of attempts, made over a period of 150 years, to separate Catholicism from a policy, worthy enough, but which had constituted itself an intransigent guardian of sepulchres. The name of a great Pope will always be associated with it. But it was the preoccupation of many great minds before his. In the very first rank I would name Ozanam and Lacordaire, whom I regard as two of the most sanely balanced and realistic minds of French Catholicism, in the nineteenth century. Recently one of their most brilliant disciples, and the actual editor of our best Catholic fortnightly organ, *Le Correspondant*, has declared that to these men and to their friends we are indebted for the sole victories gained by Catholics in the political sphere during the past century.

In *The Figaro* of November 22, 1925, M. Georges Goyau wrote an article entitled *The Dupanloup Law*, which began as follows:

During the nineteenth century the Church in France acquired two liberties. One, the liberty of secondary education, was won by Falloux; the other, the liberty of higher education, by Dupanloup. It is not the fault of these two men if, despite the fact that they were Catholics first and liberals afterwards, the title of "liberal Catholics" has been fastened upon them. The name is one which they did not choose themselves. It was even invented the better to combat their efforts. It is too late now to strike it from current nomenclature. But we consent to bear it today only on condition that it does not lead careless or misinformed thinkers into grave error. In any case results speak for themselves. It is an historical fact that the two great laws under whose aegis Christian thought has flourished for a hundred years in France are the work of two "liberals." May one ask just how much of tangible, practical, and durable benefit has been accomplished during the same period by the Christian adversaries of liberalism.

I do not greatly like the last word, used, as it is so often, with an equivocal significance. But at least

I insist that when the term "liberal Catholic" is used, all those should be comprehended who, in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have striven to keep their religious convictions alive in modern societies, by pouring old wine into new bottles.

This movement of adaptation, of reality, of separation between politics and religion, has been resisted, and resisted violently. Since the days of de Maistre, laymen without any authority and often without any theology, in more than one case without even faith, have assumed the leadership of French Catholic politicians, with de Bonald, Louis Veuillot, Cassagnac, and Drumont. Maurras finally has been clever enough to rally round his banner—that patchwork affair of superficial science, classical but dry literature, and hard-shell nationalism—all the mutes, mourners, sentimentalists, and sophists of alarmed conservatism. The blind faith of these docile followers, easy dupes as they are of gestures and traditions, is shaken neither by the fact that he remains constant to his atheism, his old hostility to Christ and the Gospels, nor by the appearance on his right and left hand of two lieutenants, one of whom, Daudet, is a notorious Rabelaisian, while the other, Jacques Bainville, is doing his best to inoculate French history and international policy with the virus of Prussianism.

The ancestors of *l'Action Française*, its associates, and the journal itself, have defended Catholicism, but in their own manner. They have compromised it in their headlong adventures, they have tempted it away from its fitting leaders, and they have stripped it of all the aspects that would have gained the hearts of the masses. These they have succeeded in convincing that religion is a grim sentinel in the service of the propertied classes and disdainful intellectuals.

They have permitted the blind sectaries of anti-religion to turn every generous national movement to their own profit, and to divert it from the path of wisdom. Aspirations, quite legitimate, toward more justice in politics, in the social and the economic realm, toward tolerance in a society that has become so diverse, have always found many Catholic politicians ranged against them. It is in their ranks that the appeals of the Pontiffs for peace, for international fraternity, have found the hardest hearts and deafest ears. With his puerile and pagan nationalism, Charles Maurras has literally poisoned that section of French Catholicism which has come under his influence. Together with his alter ego, Bainville, he is responsible in great measure for the difficulties with which France has had to contend ever since the war. The pretensions, ridiculous and terrifying at the same time, of these men, have largely contributed to immerse some of our statesmen in an egotistical oblivion of the solidarity which rules a complex world, and to raise up for our country hatreds which only seek an opportunity to hurl themselves into the *mêlée* afresh. It is they who, on the very morrow of the Armistice, demanded

from Germany an indemnity of 2,000 milliards of francs in gold, coupled with what was, in fact, a system of perpetual servitude. Not only has the "bloc national" fallen under their tutelage, to its own undoing, but they have drawn into the orbit of their ignorance and passions the majority of French Catholics. Under their influence La Croix has succeeded in familiarizing its rather special public, with a watered edition of the immoral nationalism of Maurras and Bainville.

Is it surprising to see the French masses turn their faces from men like these? Unhappily, when they abandon them, they leave without any defense in the nation the cause which these men have bound to the chariot wheels of their political adventures. Let us suppose for an instant that Calvert, Carroll, Ireland, and, above all, the immortal Cardinal Gibbons, instead of inspiring and observing a policy of gradual adaptation, prudence, and separation of the spiritual and temporal spheres, had flung themselves into the political arena to combat everything that Americans legitimately love and esteem? What would be the situation of the Church in America today? It would be what it is in France. And this situation would have been its reward from the day it chose to abandon the sane path which Gibbons had marked out. Today, on the contrary, it enjoys full liberty, and the respect and prestige which this great churchman won for it.

This, though Mr. Coleman may fail to recognize it, is the sole question at issue. It is more than doubtful that he renders America and his coreligionaries a service in holding up the doctrines of Maurras for their acceptance and admiration. Other admirers have attempted the same task in Belgium. Common sense and Christian sentiment in that country made short work of their propaganda. In this connection, I would urge him to read a pamphlet written by M. Passlecq, an eminent lawyer and Catholic, of Brussels, and the enquiry upon Maurrasism carried out among 100 representative Catholics.

I have already written at some length, but I cannot conclude without referring to one insinuation made by Mr. Coleman. He states that "these same things were said twenty years ago, with much garbling of quotations, by some fanatics on the other side (including unhappily two or three priests) who seemed to place their democracy before their Catholicism."

I am one of those fanatics. I avow it with all humility, but with no shame at all. But one thing I am justified in saying. A democrat rather for rational than sentimental reasons, ignorant even whether I should be classed as a French Royalist or a French Republican, I nevertheless assert that I have never in my life placed democracy before Catholicism. I have even reproached certain groups with having made the connection between Catholicism and democracy too inherent. It is right that we should at all costs strive to save that religion, so marvelous an instrument of "checks and balances," by which order and authority,

individual rights and liberty, are eminently safeguarded. But the errors of Lamennais and a few others do not excuse Maurras for amputating the Church from the Gospel, for presenting her as the inveterate enemy of democracy, and seeking to preempt her authority on behalf of his own shameless disrespect for the individual. If there be one formidable and authentic legacy of Judaeo-Christian civilization, it is respect for the individual. From this point of view I hold the doctrine of Maurras, Mr. Coleman's master, as absolutely irreconcilable with Catholic doctrine—indeed, as its antagonist.

Mr. Coleman will find abundant proofs of my affirmation in the second volume of my *Enseignement Social de Jésus*, and still more in volumes four and five, which have just appeared, and in which I treat the entire question of justice from the point of view of the Gospels.

He will probably be surprised to learn that the views which I have propounded are, even today, the views of two or three groups of Catholic democrats, who possibly make less noise than l'Action Française, that hollow engine of brass, braying in the midst of a nation "en bloc"—I speak of the group of the Petit Democrate, who count fifteen deputies among their number; of the group of La Jeune Democrate, headed by Marc Sangnier, which has an undeniable influence on the French masses. I do not forget the Democrate, of Paris, nor the élite which is ranged under the banners of the Semaines Sociales.

I stand quite apart from all of these groups, and, up to the present, have never seen my way clear to join any of them. But I declare solemnly that, in my eyes, religious peace and the possible realization of the rights of belief in France, depend on the triumph of the Catholic Democrats. All I desire for them are clearer and more precise views on these possibilities and the way to realize them. If they play their part wisely and well, a vast majority, perhaps not yet of voters, but of sympathizers, will be won by them and will support their efforts. Results will depend above all things upon the measure in which they have made their progress, definite and conscientious, and on the education of the public by printed word. One of their great needs is an adequate press. But a still greater need is for pressmen of live ideas and tenacious will.

(This view of policies attributed to MM. Maurras and Daudet, will be followed shortly by an article giving other aspects of the question, which will be written for The Commonwealth by Abbé Felix Klein.—The Editors.)

At the Wedding

A lean old lady
wears white,
like a blackberry vine
in blossom.

PAUL SANDOZ.

OUR LADY OF THE CENACLE

By HELEN WALKER

IT WAS in recognition of that spiritual truth that a certain hunger of the soul can only be satisfied by a withdrawal apart to pray and meditate, that the order of Our Lady of the Cenacle was founded.

The soul's necessity for support is as universal as is the body's necessity for food—yet as little children will feel physical hunger, nor know what they need, adults will suffer from this soul-hunger and not recognize it nor its remedy. The purpose of race-perpetuation has taught care of the body through knowledge of the body—but the more important perpetuation of the soul through knowledge of the soul, has not been as solicitously studied.

Nevertheless, at the end of the nineteenth century, which marked a date significant in the spiritual history of American womanhood, there had long existed in parts of the old world, fostered for generations in Catholic tradition, a recognition of this soul-hunger and an established method of satisfying it—the method of retreats. And from the old world, the Jesuits, the Benedictines, the Passionists, and others had brought early to this country their various systems of retreat as established since the foundation of their orders. But before the end of the nineteenth century there was no order in America especially dedicated to the work of giving retreats to laywomen.

In 1826, in La Louvesc, France, Mother Marie Victoire Thérèse Couderc, under the guidance of Father Jean Pierre Etienne Terme, a priest whose life was one of devoted zeal in the service of the Church, had founded the order of Our Lady of the Cenacle. Its purpose was the providing of laywomen's retreats and the teaching of Christian Doctrine. The Cenacle, or Upper Room, where Christ gathered the Twelve about Him for the Last Supper, and where, after the Ascension, Mary and the Disciples awaited the coming of the Holy Ghost, seemed most appropriately to lend its name to Mother Couderc's order—for that first Cenacle of almost 1900 years ago, had indeed been a place of withdrawal and spiritual preparation.

This year, the centenary of the inauguration of the order, sees the dream of its foundress gloriously fulfilled, for its convents now offer havens of spiritual peace to the women of France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and England—and what is yet more remarkable, America. In all of these the centenary of the order has been celebrated with appropriate ceremonies. The Cenacle in New York observed it with a solemn triduum which began on Ascension Thursday and was attended by hundreds, and the Chicago Cenacle held similar ceremonies.

It was in 1892 that the first pioneers of the Cenacle came to America. Three courageous women, surely,

relying solely upon the guidance of the Spirit, for their mission was one that reason could have well discouraged. America was a land very different from those old-world countries which had, for centuries, breathed the very air of Catholic tradition. These, truly, were countries possessed of sufficient spiritual history to have acquired a vivid appreciation of the necessity of the soul for withdrawal.

But America, up to that time, had been so occupied wrestling a nation from a vast wilderness, and meeting the huge economic needs of that new nation by networks of railroads, factories, and water-ways, that she had had little leisure to study her soul. America was still learning how to care for the body, and the older nations of Europe looked askance at what they deemed her over-solicitude—not considering that this country, so recently born, had been given by God a physical formation that stretched 3,000 miles across from ocean to ocean, out-measuring that of any nation in the world. They did not realize that America had to become "industrialized," "self-sufficient," "material"—all the things aesthetic Europe condemned her for—else she would have perished. Having as yet demonstrated little spiritual vitality, they deemed her incapable of it for many generations, and so it was that pessimism and discouragement greeted the venture to these shores of those three pioneers of the European Cenacle.

Nevertheless, America, having won the right to exist, found it time—more than time—to turn to things of the spirit and to minister to its needs. She welcomed the sisters of the Cenacle who had come to this country to help her in that ministry—to give her daughters sanctuaries of spiritual inspiration—places of retreat from the material confusion of her big cities, where, indeed, it is difficult to hear the voice of the soul above the deafening clangor and din of the necessities of daily social and business life.

There have been, it is true, retreats given for Catholic laywomen at many convents since their foundation in this country; but these have usually occurred not more than twice a year. The Cenacle offers them at all times during the year, and of differing periods to suit the needs of differing circumstances—retreats of thirty days, retreats of one week, retreats of three days, week-end retreats of two days, and even retreats of one day. The Cenacle is, in fact, a house of perpetual retreat, offering women of the world that peace of retirement and the concurrent happiness that comes with the vision of the inner life.

Yearly, the number of Catholic women in America seeking this spiritual solace is increasing so rapidly that the Cenacle must, and is, making preparations

to extend its scope and to train more novices to enter this invaluable work. At present there are, in this country, Cenacle convents in New York (at 140 Street and Riverside Drive); in Newport, Rhode Island; in Boston; in Chicago; and at Lake Ronkonkoma, Long Island, on the 300 acre estate given to the order by Miss Maude Adams.

It is at the latter place that a new novitiate is being built which will accommodate one hundred novices, and prepare them for that spiritual assistance which American Catholic women are more and more steadily looking to the Cenacle to give. The new building, which will house the community and the novices, will leave the present convent free for the retreatants, and here will come—indeed, have come already in large numbers—women seeking to appease that hunger of the soul; women exhausted from the demands of business and social life; women contemplating marriage; women facing a grief or bereavement; women preparing for motherhood. Haven for those who possess much, and those who possess little, will be here in equal measure—provided for by subscriptions toward the building fund from the Cenacle's friends.

The Cenacle, in its method of giving retreats, follows closely that originated by Saint Ignatius. The order gives private retreats to those who wish to perform the exercises alone, under the guidance of one of the sisters; and general retreats which are conducted by a visiting priest, and which are sometimes attended by as many as sixty women. In the former, the day is begun with attendance at Mass, which is said at seven o'clock. After breakfast at eight, the first meditation in the chapel is made, based on a reading of one of the exercises of Saint Ignatius. This meditation occupies from one-half to three-quarters of an hour. It can be followed by a stroll through the grounds or additional reading. At half past ten, the second meditation is made, after which the retreatant is free for more reading. Luncheon is served at one o'clock, and the third meditation takes place at half-past two, followed by the fourth at four o'clock. At five, Benediction is sung in the chapel, and six is the supper-hour. A visit to the chapel and more spiritual reading, if desired, precedes the time of retiring at nine-thirty.

In the general retreats, this program is supplemented by four sermons given in the chapel throughout the day by the visiting priest, and based on the aspects of the meditations. At breakfast and luncheon one of the nuns reads aloud from some book of spiritual outlook, and for the duration of both private and general retreats, silence is observed by the retreatants.

When one has seen the Cenacle at Lake Ronkonkoma, one understands even yet more clearly why Maude Adams, that personality so definitely marked from the early stages of her distinguished career with all the qualities of gentleness and aloofness, and whose acting, like all fine art, was ever of the spirit, was moved to give her beautiful country estate to this order of

semi-contemplative nuns. Though not of the same faith, she and they share a certain spiritual kinship. They have each sought and cherished in their own fashion, solitude. And now, what was once Miss Adams's room, is the exquisite little chapel where daily Mass is celebrated and Benediction given. The very house planned by her as shelter from the active world into which her career thrust her, bespeaks the high values of solitude and peace—a fitting place of retreat. That silence of undisturbed nature, which is yet not a silence, since it is broken by the whispering of great trees and the songs of wild birds, surrounds it. There, little paths thread their way off the main roads and lose themselves in leafy cloisters. One chances upon rustic shrines on the trees sheltering statues of Our Lady where nature itself seems to be at prayer. The Stations of the Cross go winding up a hill beautifully suggestive of that hill trod by Christ, and over them great oaks bend in reverent contemplation.

There is an old-world sanctity about it all—here, scarcely a two hours' ride from that greatest city of the world, New York, a mart that typifies the utmost in industrial, commercial, and material effort—here in a corner of what not so long ago was condemned as spiritually bereft America.

Miss Adams built her house above the shores of a charming little lake, and the new novitiate, already well begun, was also planned to overlook it. But lo, last winter, the little lake, for reasons best known to itself, betook its nineteen feet of water elsewhere, leaving in its place only a rounded basin sloped by gentle banks. It was a curious sensation to walk over this spot which had been covered, since the memory of man in those parts, with clear, blue water. Snowy stones, washed perhaps for generations by that water, lie about, and there are patches of white sand and undergrowth. There I picked up a glistening Indian arrowhead, carved from a crystal-like stone that was streaked with crimson. One of the nuns at Ronkonkoma is assured that the little lake disappeared at a Divine command, and that its bed has been laid bare to offer treasure to the Cenacle for its work. This seems the less improbable, the closer one comes in contact with that work. *Nous verrons.*

It would not be fitting to close an article on the Cenacle without mentioning one of its greatest prides—the fact that the present Holy Father was, for many years before his Pontificate, chaplain to the Cenacle of Milan.

One who has been favored with making a retreat at this woodland sanctuary of Ronkonkoma, on passing, at departure, through the main hall, is struck with the double significance of the simple bronze tablet to Miss Adams placed over the great fireplace. The inscription reads: "It blesseth him that gives and him that takes." It is this assurance that every retreatant, seeking and finding appeasement for that hunger of the soul at Ronkonkoma, carries away with her.

THREE IRISH PLACES

By PADRAIC COLUM

I CAME into Louth by the ways Cuchulinn came into it when he visited Emer in her father's Dun hereabout: From the dark covert of the sea, across the great sow's back, between the god and his seer, over the marrow of Fedelm, past the washing of the horses of Dea. I partook of less heroic fare than the bane of a chariot, however, and I did not come to the daughters of the nephew of Tethra the Formorian. Anyway I came into the County Louth.

I like Louth. It seems to me to be the most humanized of all Irish counties. Here are no bogs as in the midlands. Here are no masses of stones as in the West and Northwest. Here are no shadowed glens and dark tarns as in Wicklow, the county that is at the other side of Dublin County. Louth is green and level. Its fields grow oats and barley, and graze cattle. The road goes between high hedges and low walls. Along the roads graze goats and geese—very shaggy goats and very white geese. And I remember that I came upon an old woman in a very little field who was quite surrounded with goats and she was singing a slow old song. She was good enough to sing it over to me—an old true-lover's song, she said it was, and she heard it sung at a wedding in Tormon Feckin forty years before. I liked the song. It was: "Once I was at a nobleman's wedding; 'Twas of a girl that proved unkind."

The Boyne has an outlet to the sea here: for two miles the tide comes up the river; when it is out great muddy flats are left where the road goes. These flats I like, too. I have seen on them herons taller and with wider wings than I have ever seen in any other place in Ireland; when they rise up and drift away their wings have just the color that the twilight sky has hereabouts.

Monasterboice: But, of course, the great glory of County Louth is Monasterboice. There are the great crosses cut in sandstone that have been standing for a thousand years. There is that masterpiece of Irish sculpture, the Cross of Muiredach. It is shorter than the other crosses; its arms with the circle around them are wider; the cross is covered with sculptures that illustrate a whole mythology. And the faces shown in them are the faces of Irish people of today—I look on one or two that are likenesses of particular friends of mine. There is a tower in Monasterboice, and I mount it, thinking I should be able to look from it back to the north and to the place where the hosts of Queen Maeve were held back by Cuchulinn. A great piece of broken wall stands between me and the outlook to the north. I look down and into the middle of the half-acre of graves and grass that is Monasterboice. I can see two of the famous crosses.

Irish yew-trees, dark and upright and lonesome, grow here and go well with the graves, the crosses, and the tower; between the crosses and the yew-trees the swallows fly.

Glendaloch: Glendaloch is legendary—I feel like calling it this, not because of the traditions connected with the place, but because it seems as if we had known it at a time in our lives when everything had a legend—a legend known or unknown. These yew-trees—surely they have a legend that we once knew. And the Round Tower—everything that we heard about builders in fables belongs to it. The walls of the little churches, the tombstones that lurk behind yew-trees and great laurels and ancient walls, the quern-stone that has been left here—they all have legends that have not been transmitted to us. And so have the wrens that flutter from bush to bush, from wall to wall, from ivy-clump to ivy-clump, and the red-breasts that sing into the evening, the herons that fly over the waters, and the lakes—or rather, the two tarns of dark water that are here—they are all out of an age of fable. We hear of great destructions that were wrought in this place—of pillagings, by Norse and Norman, by English and by Irish, but how can we believe that such things happened when we know that Glendaloch belongs forever to the simple-hearted; no one was ever here except shepherds and saints.

A story told about Saint Kevin seems to me to express the spirit of the place. He was once praying, his arms, in the Irish fashion, outstretched so that he formed a cross. A blackbird built her nest in the palm that was held out and laid her eggs in the nest. The Saint became aware of the nest when the eggs were laid. Then, rather than disturb the mother-bird, he kept his hand outstretched. He kept it out until the eggs were hatched and the fledglings were ready to fly. They say that a carving in the old church illustrated this legend. Anyway, Saint Kevin is always represented with a blackbird's nest. I remember a stained-glass window by Miss Purser that showed the Saint with the nest.

Birds, naturally, are in the legends relating to the place. "O servant of God, whither art thou bound?" said one of the severer anchorites to Kevin when he saw him all ready for one of his frequent journeys. "Thou hast heard that no bird while flying can hatch her eggs." One expects a particular sort of legend in Glendaloch. For one thing, it is the only part of Ireland where one sees shepherds and sheep rather than herdsmen and cattle. When a prince asked him where he should build an oratory for him, Kevin answered: "Round a shepherd's grave; cut away the

thorns and thistles, my sons, and make a beautiful spot of the place." Shepherds and saints—one can hardly think of any other sort of folk having been here.

There is a stone with a hollow in it that is called the Deer Stone. While one of the churches was being built the wife of a worker died, leaving two infants. Apparently there were no cattle around, for Kevin had to command a doe to come down from the mountain to give nourishment to the children. She was milked into the hollow of the stone; on a stone nearby is the mark of where the father sat.

They were shepherds who discovered Kevin; he was living in a hollow tree, a young anchorite. A friend of mine, a scholar, maintains that Kevin came to overthrow some pagan mystery that was connected with the dark lakes here; he came, some say in the fifth, some, in the sixth century. The monastery that he founded had its great period at the beginning of the tenth century—now, the high Round Tower, the ruins of little churches, are all that remain of the establishment. The Round Tower is over a hundred feet high. But one does not think of it as really high—everything here has to be on a companionable level. It looks like a high candle there. And in the cone-shaped Irish yew-trees that grow near it, nature seems to have made an effort to produce trees that can stand beside the ancient Irish towers, and over graves, as in this place.

Clonmacnoise: "In a quiet watered land, a land of roses, stands Saint Kieran's city fair. . . ." So the poem about Clonmacnoise—surely one of the most beautiful poems about a place ever written—begins. I do not know O'Gnive's poem in the original, but it can hardly be more beautiful than the translation by T. W. Rolleston. It has in it what is most authentic in Irish literature—the sense of kinship with the dead, the power of being stirred by heroic memories.

Clonmacnoise is not a land of roses; it is not near any place that at any time might have been a land of roses. And I doubt if Kieran, the carpenter's son, had any care to found a monastery in a place where roses might grow abundantly. "If we had remained here," said he, speaking of another place further up the river where he and his companions had stayed for a while, "if we had remained here we would have plenty of wealth, but few souls would go to Heaven."

It was in 544 that Saint Kieran came here and laid the foundation of a place of learning. His community had a longer life than most learned communities have enjoyed—it lasted for a thousand years, until the English garrison in Athlone destroyed its flickering life in 1552. Its great period was midway between these dates.

Now Clonmacnoise stands open to the sky where the broad, slow-flowing Shannon makes a bend. At the other side of the river are the flat pastures of Roscommon. There are curlews in flocks there; they rise up making a call that, more than any other call

of birds, belongs to emptiness, to desolation. I sit under an ash-tree that has the wind roaring in its branches, and look on the towers, the ruined churches, the high crosses, and the river bending beyond.

The crosses at Monasterboice, and the crosses here, are amongst the great pieces of monumental sculpture. One has never seen a Celtic cross unless one has seen the crosses in these places, and, perhaps, the cross in Iona: what is put up for modern monuments is a travesty of something done in a great style. Like the cross of Muiredach in Monasterboice, the crosses here are of limestone and are covered with quaint sculptures; Turcan was the sculptor of the higher of the two; the cross at Monasterboice belongs to his school.

Two crosses, two towers, the ruins of two churches—these are the visible monuments in Clonmacnoise. One of the round towers—O'Rourke's Tower, I think it is called, carried my mind up further than any round tower I have ever seen. It is topless. Looking on it one can believe that the men who lived in this strange place a thousand years ago built it, not sixty or seventy, but 600 feet high; high as it is it seems the remnant of a still higher tower. Beside the other tower is a ruined church with a beautiful doorway.

But, Clonmacnoise! And Turcan, who didst sculpture at the base of thy great cross "an ecclesiastic sitting on a chair, holding a teacher's ferule or rod, on the top of which is an owl, the symbol of wisdom, while its end rests on a beast denoting ignorance," what of that little Protestant church with its horrid little roof of tight slates and with its padlock on the door—what of this church that breaks the balance of the towers and stands right in the way of the grave, grey ruin of an ancient church as one looks at Clonmacnoise from the river? Turcan! Clonmacnoise! Indeed it is true, that in Ireland the more ancient a burial place is the more it is desecrated, and that one gets used to seeing foolish little marble headstones and glass cases that enclose artificial wreaths on the graves that break the grasses in Cashel and in Glendalough! But, Clonmacnoise! none other of Ireland's sacred places has an eyesore planted so permanently upon it as you have!

Across the river is Connacht: one sees a few white, friendly houses; they are in the County Roscommon.

This Maytime

Since she is gone,
This spring I cannot bear
To walk beneath the weight of lilac scent
That presses on my nostrils and my heart
With ill intent.

Since she is lost
But lately unto me, I am not strong
Enough without the armor of her love
To brave the daggers in a robin's song.

JESSICA POWERS.

THE MYSTERY OF MEXICO

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

MANY years ago, a displaced kneecap and absence of all other reading matter made it possible to read from end to end the venerable Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg's *Quatre Lettres sur le Mexique*, a feat not otherwise easy of accomplishment for his "four letters" run through formidable volumes and complicated theories which no one may test who is unfamiliar with the hieroglyphs of the Gulf countries.

The Abbé's principal theory is that the Aztec priests, a caste possessing knowledge held secret from the people, had also two languages, one for public expounding of the mysteries of worship, another for the initiate; that this double meaning of the same Aztec words was made possible by intonation of their chants in a manner similar to some aspects of the Chinese language whereby a word takes different meanings according to the inflection of the voice as the word is uttered. A chant intoned before the public would take, according to this theory, a totally different meaning when intoned with different inflections to those initiated in the priestly mysteries.

His theory explains the disappearance of knowledge of this civilization, by the suppression and slaughter of the priestly ruling class at the conquest and the destruction of their writings by the handful of Spanish soldiers who possessed themselves of their kingdom. Doubtless it was an act of "military necessity," not greatly surprising in men who had been reared in warfare against the heathen for so many centuries, but a great loss nevertheless.

The Abbé takes as his text a fragment which has been preserved, the tale of the Aztec wanderings until they settled permanently in the valley of Mexico. Testing this fragment by his theory, he brings forth, by intoning it with other inflections, a description of a continent intermediate between America, Europe and Africa, the state of its civilization, and its destruction by natural causes quite possible and plausibly reasoned. We have here, of course, Atlantis, "the fountain of the Central American cultural system." It is, perhaps, less interesting that in this account he follows a branch of the Mexicans to their present abode, than that he derives all mythology from this cataclysm. Certainly the extinction of an island or archipelago great enough to be classed as a small continent would be likely to remain in some form in the memory and tradition of mankind, but to follow the Abbé to his conclusions would need, as has been said, a knowledge of the Mexican hieroglyphs.

However one may regard the probabilities of this discovery, the result of many years of mission work among the peoples of Mexico and the Maya countries, there is much of value in the mass of evidence for his theory which the Abbé draws from these years, which is only part of that enormous wealth of knowledge and of ancient tradition scattered among the religious orders and among the mission priests. Every priest in the missions of the Mayan borderland has such tales to tell of unexplored mysteries as drove Columbus on his venture. The old generation of priests which lived contentedly in the wilderness for half a century is dying off, and leaving nothing written. The old men of the tribes are dying, and the younger ones forgetting. Even the "white Indians" behind the San Blas coast of Panama—described by the Englishman, Dr. Lionel Wafer nearly three hundred years ago—are being drawn from their retirement and brought to Chicago to learn

the multiplication table and the list of American presidents, by explorers who have only now become conscious of their existence through common talk along the Canal Zone. Every large Indian village in Guatemala has one or two witch doctors, mysterious personages whose real character is shrewdly guessed at by the local priest as being in reality simply that of secret followers of the old cults and heathen rites. These men are feared by their Christian neighbors, but feared, quite possibly, less because of actual sorceries (to which the eye of the cabildu is more alert than to other things of more practical importance) than for some concealed relation with the ancient masters.

People at Quetzaltenango, or as near the capital as San Juan Sacatepequez and Mixco will tell of the disappearance of these people at certain long intervals, into the wilderness beyond Verapaz and Petén.

Priests in that primeval region have heard of a living city of the ancients. Several have claimed actually to have seen from afar, with glasses, the walls and pyramids of the secret city, approach to which is death. There are allusions to an unconquered stronghold of the old Mayan priests in many older Spanish writings. The tradition has persisted from the conquest and the first settlements in Mexico and Guatemala and Yucatan. Somewhere in the Petén—Quintana Roo region, runs the tale, is a walled place of temples; not dead, not ruined, and covered with trees and creepers, buried in mounds of century-old tropical mould, like Copán, like Querigua, like the cities being sought and explored by expeditions from American universities. Ancient tradition, still persisting fifteen years ago, claimed there a living refuge of the last descendants of the priestly caste, the ancient masters, rulers of their people centuries before the coming of Cortez, still practising their bloody rites destroyed elsewhere by the Spaniards, still guarding the secret knowledge of their old civilization.

As party after party of American archaeologists penetrates the wilderness, equipped with all that makes jungle travel possible, these old tales come north to fire the imagination. It is not our own, unfortunately, who are drawn to the quest. Others profit by the "monkish tales" and seem to be on the point of unlocking the treasure-house of American history in which our own scant four hundred years of varied European influence is but an interlude. We are perhaps still too busy recapturing the broken threads of European history, reweaving our own immediate story to turn our own attention to the past of the new land wherein we dwell. That past, however, has a mighty influence upon some of our neighbors whose inhabitants are in major part descended from an America more ancient than our own, whose national characteristics are interwoven with trends and tendencies that we cannot even imagine.

Mexico at this moment is very much in the minds of Catholic Americans. We resent deeply what is happening there to fellow Christians. We wish to be assured that our government knows what is happening and that our government is doing what government may do lawfully and properly for the protection at least of those who share our own nationality. What do we really know, however, of the forces working there? Radicalism, Bolshevism, anti-clericalism, atheism, are all European terms. Can they be so easily applied to a people of descent at least as ancient as western European civilization, of a cultural history so remote, in as far as we are now able to visualize it, from anything known in Europe, a people only lightly touched by European culture, whose national growth

is so wholly distinct from our own? It is possible to contend that under alien Spanish rule the people of Mexico had no more to do with government than they did under the Aztec, Toltec, or Maya.

Since the first quarter of the nineteenth century and the separation from Spain, the Spanish element in the country, still alien, has struggled with alternating success against the resurgence of the native races, under a system of government alien to both. A constitutional republic is no more natural to the Spaniard than it is to the descendant of Montezuma. In spite of Las Casas the mind of very large numbers of Mexicans remains a dark and unexplored mystery in the matter of religion. There are great regions where four centuries of Christianity have sunk but precarious roots. It is not safe to think of what is happening there in European terms. Those who have lived in Asia may find it easier to understand the Mexican, since they have already been shaken out of their European concepts.

A very keen American publisher remarked not long since, after a visit to Rome, that far from being a machine or an organization, the Catholic Church with its disorderly duplication of every effort, with its astounding inefficiency could not last a day unless by the strength of a "motivating" ideal.

It may be that the Church in America has a particular mission now that its domestic problems are solved, and that remark may have a bearing on it: namely, the coördinating of historical and of archaeological knowledge, the collation and scientific direction of 2,000 years of Christian experience upon mission work, with full utilization of all modern equipment.

Cantiga in Praise of Saint Mary

Translated from the Galician by Thomas Walsh

Rose of roses, Flower of flowers,
Lady of ladies, Power of powers!

Rose of beauty and loveliness,
Flower of joy and happiness,
Lady of pieties that bless,
Queen of aid in our evil hours;
Rose of roses, Flower of flowers,
Lady of ladies, Power of powers!

To such a Lady great love is due;
In times of need she can guard us true,
And gain our sins their pardon too;
The sweetest in our earthly bowers,
Rose of roses, Flower of flowers,
Lady of ladies, Power of powers!

And we should love and serve her well,
Nor ever fail our pledge to tell,
And she our evils will repel,
And gain our forfeit with her dowers,
Rose of roses, Flower of flowers,
Lady of ladies, Power of powers!

This Lady whom we hail as Queen,
Whose troubadour we fain have been,
Will reign for us in love serene
When other loves we call not ours.
Rose of roses, Flower of flowers,
Lady of ladies, Power of powers!

ALFONSO X (1221-1284).

COMMUNICATIONS

THE MEXICAN SITUATION

Los Altos, Calif.

TO the Editor:—The articles and communications in the issue of May 5 on the Mexican situation have naturally aroused discussion.

Mr. William F. Sands, in the course of his plea for a sane and cautious policy in our dealings with Mexico, makes the following statement: "With the broad question of the rights of Mexicans in spiritual matters as against their own government, it is safe to posit that our government has nothing whatever to do." If such be the case, why did Secretary of State Lansing, at the direction of the United States Senate, interrogate the then provisional government, as to whether the government would guarantee and provide religious liberty for its people? (Light on Mexican Darkness, The Commonweal, May 5). What business was it of his or of the United States Senate, whether freedom of religion was granted or not?

Again, why did Secretary Bryan, in a series of communications intended for Generals Villa and Carranza, warn the rebel leaders that "in order to command the sympathy and moral support of America, Mexico must have, when her reconstruction comes, true freedom of conscience and worship." (Catholic Mind, May 8, 1915). What right had Mr. Bryan to specify as a condition for recognition, religious freedom for the Mexican people?

If Mr. Sands's contention be correct, then it would appear that at least two of our secretaries of state were entirely out of bounds in attempting to dictate to a foreign state what its attitude should be toward religion.

But is Mr. Sands's view correct? This is what a number of readers would like to have settled.

In the same issue of The Commonweal, Mr. Carlton J. Hayes and Father John A. Ryan write more or less sympathetically of certain elements in the Mexican revolutionary program. The former believes it would be "a most mistaken and short-sighted policy for Catholic Americans to endeavor to make the present welfare of the Catholic Church in Mexico a special object of solicitude on the part of the United States government."

The latter thinks that "in due time an understanding, a tolerable adjustment, will be reached between Catholic interests in Mexico and the government of that country."

We think Mr. Hayes unduly alarmed over the possible results of Catholics in this country protesting to our government against the anti-religious tyranny which rages in Mexico. He fears lest threats from the United States "will intensify greatly and prolong indefinitely the present tyrannical régime in Mexico."

Evidently Mr. Hayes does not share the view of many well-informed persons, that without the moral support and sympathy of the United States, not one of the governments that have misruled Mexico for a century could have endured. Let the United States withdraw recognition, which was only granted conditionally, and the Calles régime will be doomed.

As to Dr. Ryan's roseate view of the future one would like to know on what he bases his hopes. Is it the respect he has for those clauses of the Constitution of 1917 which appear to be favorable to labor, that clouds his vision to the iniquity of the legislation on religion? Is there anything in the conduct of the rascals who are in power at present in

Mexico to warrant the Doctor's cheerful view of the situation? We think not. If Dr. Ryan is the possessor of "inside information" which leads him to speak so optimistically of what is to most of us a most deplorable condition, he ought to release his knowledge for the benefit of all concerned.

F. A. CASEY.

MR. SANDS REPLIES TO DR. RYAN

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—Is it consistent with the proprieties to register objection to the use of the words "very false," by Dr. John A. Ryan in connection with my view that our government has nothing whatever to do with "the broad question of the rights of Mexicans in spiritual matters as against their own government"?

May I also point out that in his letter to *The Commonwealth* of May 19, Dr. Ryan charges me (to my surprise) with a false statement, and then skips to something quite different from my statement, to "assurances given by officials of the Mexican government to officials of the government of the United States that the [Mexican] laws of reform which guarantee individual freedom of worship according to everyone's conscience shall be strictly observed"? That is a new statement and not an answer to mine, which was addressed specifically to an opinion current among some Catholic Americans that our government has an inherent and unqualified right and duty to concern itself with the internal spiritual affairs of Mexico, an opinion contrary to what is considered axiomatic between nations.

Dr. Ryan says that in his judgment "the United States should be very much concerned with the rights of Mexicans in spiritual matters if for no other reason than that its trust has been shamefully abused by a foreign nation, and its faith in promises solemnly made put to a severe test." What, exactly, does he mean here by "the United States"? Does he mean our government expressing the considered will of all the people, or of a majority of the people, within the rules set down for intercourse between nations; or does he mean a large number of people who have not yet, apparently, arrived at unanimity upon the principles involved?

It is strange that it should be necessary between Catholics to affirm agreement with him that the action of Mexico is deeply wounding to all concerned, and that, as Catholics and as Americans, we have a right and a duty to do all we can properly to alleviate the situation in question. I take that for granted; my present care is for the principles involved and for correct procedure worthy of enlightened citizens.

I am, at present, warning against ill-considered violence. I am suggesting that we face the situation as Christians rather than as dragoons, and I am sure that Dr. Ryan will admit that there has been a tendency that way, which he also, I believe, has opposed. What, in his judgment, are the rights and duties accruing to the government of the United States, out of "the assurances of Mexican officials to officials of the United States government," which he quotes? Do these assurances constitute treaty rights of the United States? Are they enforceable?

If so, how does Dr. Ryan, as a practical thinker, propose to enforce these treaty rights? What is the correct and dignified procedure? And what is the alternative? If these assurances do not constitute enforceable treaty rights, what does he suggest that we do about it? It seems that at the trifling expense of an unparliamentary word we may, perhaps, be on the point of evolving a helpful plan.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

TO PROHIBIT OR NOT TO PROHIBIT

Reading, Mass.

TO the Editor:—The *Commonweal*, for having the temerity to express its views "in a frank style" on the much mooted question—"To prohibit or not to prohibit," is now subjected to the verbal lash of those eminently fair and impartial critics who bear witness to the truth of G. K. Chesterton's observation that "generally speaking, men are never so mean and false and hypocritical as when they are occupied in being impartial."

Your amiable correspondent, Charles J. Byrnes, greatly exercised over the dogmatic utterances of *The Commonwealth* on this subject, becomes extremely wrought up over the attempt of its editor to bolster up his case by a quotation or two from Holy Scripture and protests most vigorously against the statement that "compulsory prohibition in general is flatly opposed to Holy Scripture and to Catholic tradition."

No longer does that statement remain "unchallenged" for if the content of Mr. Byrnes's communication [*The Prohibition Issue*, *The Commonwealth* of April 21] has any significance at all it rests in the fact that it was written primarily to challenge the untruth of this asseveration. And yet, the writer in question makes no attempt to offer any tangible proof in support of his contention that the quotation cited is essentially false. What is required in the discussion of this question is neither "sentiment" nor "viewpoints" but solid facts.

"The Church," avers your correspondent, "has her God-appointed mission and is well fitted to carry on her work; but is she wont to settle the social and political problems and riddles in a ceaselessly changing world?" If it be true "that every political question has many conceivable moral phases," would it not be in consonance with right reason to allow the Church—the moral teacher of mankind—to have a voice in their settlement, to make practical her moral teachings? "Did she settle the slave or free question?" If she did not settle the question she at least solved the problem and pointed the way as to how it should be settled by her every act when confronted with this monstrosity—long before the "land of the free and the home of the brave" was even thought of as a part of "this changing world."

Mr. Byrnes, in closing, makes the following pertinent observation: "Some of the statements appearing in our press are anarchistic in the extreme, preaching repeal by violation. One shudders to contemplate the far-reaching extent of the success of such a theory." Dealing with the same phase of the question, the *Baltimore Sun*, in its issue of February 25, 1925, has this equally pertinent observation to make: "Every good citizen will agree that the best thing to do when confronted by an unenforceable criminal statute is to get rid of it by the process provided in the Constitution. But it is not the custom to do so. There is not a state that has not on its statute books laws which are obsolete and which have been disposed of by the simple process of ignoring them. In this state [Maryland] there is hardly a citizen who does not violate on Sunday our own blue laws. We do not repeal these laws when they are no longer suitable to conditions of modern life. The legislature would not consent to their repeal. They are repealed by nullification."

If this process of repeal is "anarchistic," then we have been living in a welter of anarchy for a number of years past and, needless to say, our progress as a nation has been tolerably satisfactory despite our great handicap.

JAMES F. DESMOND.

THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The New Garrick Gaieties

THE Theatre Guild Studio—meaning the permanent junior staff of that nearly venerable organization—must have had an attack of self-consciousness in approaching the second edition of the Garrick Gaieties. One feels the chill breath of it in the opening scene, and another blast at the close—a posing of the dubious question, “Can we be as good as last year?” And even though the question is put in mockery and defiance, its feeble jest raises a spectre of truth. The crowd is out to repeat, in the full blaze of publicity, a spontaneous bit of effervescence originally designed for a few private performances only. That was the charm of last year’s Gaieties—its utter simplicity, directness, and ease. This year’s work is a very conscious effort.

This brings up the whole question of the informal as against the Broadway reviews—and the subject deserves a little honest airing. Broadway does certain things amazingly well. It establishes glamor, speed, precision. It knows how to create a spectacle. It can command the services of fabulously high-priced stars. The informal review sets out—in theory, at least—to revive wit, humor and ease, lightness, a close rapport between audience and players, and originality. It never intends to be a spectacle. In most cases it can command a quality of personal devotion and interest, and the services of intelligent writers and satirists. Its paramount charm is supposed to lie in being as unlike Broadway as possible.

Well—the Garrick Gaieties nearly hit the mark last year, although the influence of the Grand Street Follies and the Charlot review protruded itself everywhere. The delightful music of Richard Rodgers, the syncopated lyrics of Lorenz Hart, and the care-free personality of half a dozen of the leaders filled in the chinks. It was a good start, and I remember feeling that a second year ought to bring out surprisingly fine things. Instead, the new show is at best just where it was last year, and in other places suffers from the obvious strain of trying to live up to a successful past.

In one respect only it has broadened its scope. It gets rid of the family affairs of the Theatre Guild in the first two numbers instead of spending most of its time in parodying the parent. You no longer have to be intimately acquainted with the Theatre Guild season to get the point of half the burlesque. There is a good skit on the crime wave, in which a household, anxious to get in the papers, hires a burglar (much in demand for such purposes) to do his best stunts with the family jewels. A Blue Danube interlude takes the place of last year’s Mexican number and is quite as graceful. Philip Loeb and Romney Brent give us inside impersonations of Suzanne Lenglen and Helen Wills, respectively, with devastating malice. American optimism receives its death blow in a hilarious little tragedy known as Home Sweet Home, or, by inference, Polyanna of the Prairies. The “awful effect of modern magazine advertising on an impressionistic young mind” is exhibited in The Psychopathic Ward, with Romney Brent cavorting from educational five-foot books through halitosis to the great god success. All this is pretty good fare.

The musical marathon is a bit called Mountain Greenery. It is the logical if less pointed successor to last year’s Manhattan. The rest of the musical score is distinctly conven-

tional. But we can forgive much of any evening that presents us with the “100 percent American musical comedy in the best traditional manner,” with the title *Rose of Arizona* and the locale a “terrace of the Rosa Raisa Hotel, on the border-line of Mexico and Arizona.” To be sure, musical comedy of this variety is not hard to satirize. One even suspects that many serious Broadway offerings are unintentional satires. But this *Rose of Arizona*, with its lugubriously familiar music, its nasal chorus ladies, its hopeless conventionalities, and its gallant American army of six chorus men, alert in the art of song and unison gesture, is unbelievably rich in points, goads or whatever you want to call them.

On the reverse side of the shield, there are several very indifferent numbers and several that have no place in any clean-minded show whether emanating from an art theatre or from the depths of Broadway itself. If a group like the Theatre Guild juniors or the Neighborhood Playhouse has any one supreme opportunity, it is to show that wit and fun and a racing good evening need have nothing to do with smut, allusions to various perversions, and lines such as those on the virginity of Queen Elizabeth which are the natural material of the cheapest humorists of old-fashioned burlesque. Junk of this sort makes one gasp at the paucity of mind behind it. It is just plain dirt for its own sake without a vestige of cleverness. It is the typical last resort of Broadway when everything else fails to pull at the box-office. It is a real delight to praise the good numbers—they deserve it—but they don’t deserve to be infected. The show as a whole fails utterly of its main purpose because of the general murky contagion of three numbers. Sad news!

The Patsy

ONE advantage of protracted absence from Broadway—whether through sickness or other cause—is the possibility of discovering so late in the season a perfectly delightful play which you have not been able to review before. Barry Conners, the author of last year’s *Applesauce* (the name of a play, be it understood, and not an epithet!) has put a good wholesome play on the boards and has added to this minimum requirement a plenitude of wit, keen observation, under-running pathos and flashes of fairly high-grade comedy. The *Patsy* is good theatre, good entertainment and—note this—has Claiborne Foster in the cast.

Before we talk more about Miss Foster, however, a word is in order concerning the key in which *The Patsy* is played. It was obviously written as a very human comedy—not as a farce. It builds up to many situations of real poignancy and to family situations which are far too close to truth to be sound material for farce. Yet Lucia Moore as the maternal tyrant of tears and Mary Stills as the over-riding older sister spend most of their time in playing for farce effects. This may be the fault of direction, or it may be the yielding to temptation in the middle of a long run. It is too late in the season to say which. But it comes very near at times to breaking through the illusion so adroitly prepared by the rest of the cast. The point is worth mentioning because this tendency to forget the possibilities of fine comedy and to let everything degenerate into farce is increasingly common among the run

of even fairly good actors nowadays. They forget that a cheaply bought laugh brings a cheap reputation in the end to the actor himself.

Miss Foster's acting is an excellent study in the deft avoidance of farce—all the more difficult to maintain because of the mistakes of the others. First of all, she approaches the part of the misunderstood younger sister with the utmost simplicity. She never strives for an effect, but lets it come naturally, with much of that spontaneous humor and grace which distinguish Helen Hayes from her clever imitators. Then, she takes great care to let her comedy and pathos flow into one another without the abrupt breaks and mannerisms which so often crash through illusion. There are one or two places in the last act when she succumbs for a few moments to the false mood of Miss Moore and Miss Stills, but not until the major burden of the play has passed and the ending is comfortably within sight. If it were not for this slight break, her performance would be a little masterpiece in its kind.

Perhaps this is as good a time as any to break a lance with those confirmed pessimists who announce that the art of fine acting is dying out. There is a certain difficulty in finding among the younger men that particular gift of versatility which ends by becoming either great or just tiresomely superficial. But among the younger women of the present stage, there is perhaps a greater choice for future greatness than in many long years. There are, to begin with, the actresses of distinctly popular appeal—those who have mastered the artifice of acting if not its art. In this group Catherine Cornell is easily the most distinguished, with Alice Brady, Ann Harding, and one or two others approaching her very closely. Any one of them, by a turn of the wheel, or by the discipline of one very difficult part, might pass far beyond the dangerous ground of mere popularity. In a group where one feels rather deeper currents stirring, we have seen this season and last some amazing progress in the work of Helen Hayes, Blanche Yurka, Pauline Lord, Helen Gahagan, and Lynn Fontanne. Mary Ellis has recently brought her fine talent to a high pitch, and now I would venture to add that, given the right series of plays, Claiborne Foster will almost surely establish her right to join this group. In such a list, where do the pessimists find room for their gloomy observations? Plays are what we need—not actresses. Give us a few dramatists of real power, grace, and beauty of thought, and we shall quickly discover that almost no era in the American theatre has greater potential acting genius than our own. Then—on with the play!

BOOKS

BOOKS FOR THE DANTE PRIZE WORKER

"IF I wish to write an essay about Dante," inquired a recent correspondent in whimsical perplexity, "which hundred books shall I read first?" It may cheerfully be replied thereto that though the dimensions of Dante bibliography are enormous, a handful of easily accessible books will supply an adequate knowledge of what scholarship agrees is essential information about Dante's career and intentions. The following summaries, arrived at with the friendly coöperation of various publishers, may be of some value:

Adequate editions and translations of Dante are, of course, indispensable. The Italian version is obtainable in Dante: Tutte le Opere (New York: Oxford University Press. \$2.50) or The Complete Works of Dante (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$5.00). Cary's English version, the best known of the verse translations, has been issued in various forms, preferable among which are the Bohn's library edition (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$0.85) and the Everyman's library edition (New York: E. P. Dutton. \$0.80). Both have been revised and are supplied with serviceable introductions. Longfellow's translation, issued by the Houghton Mifflin Company, is a favorite with many, chiefly because its notes resume so well the findings of earlier American Dante scholarship. A more recent translation of the Divine Comedy, completed by Henry Johnson (New Haven: Yale University Press. \$2.50) is notably fine and has been termed by at least one competent reviewer "the most satisfactory rendering." Perhaps the best of the French translations is that of M. André Peraté (Paris: Librairie de l'Art Catholique). Among the German versions we may signal out the unusually scholarly achievement of August Vezin (Munich: Kösel und Pustet). Naturally the list might be extended.

Lectures have become a favorite method of introduction to subjects of interest. The Power of Dante, by Charles Hall Grandgent (Boston: Marshall Jones. \$2.00) is the collection of Lowell Institute lectures for 1917. Here are summarized in attractive form the conclusions of a lifetime's study of the elements of Dante's power. The approach is fresh and modern, the tone suitably cultural. If the chapter concerned with morality is especially terse and sympathetic, the later chapters about workmanship and diction are helpful toward the understanding of details. "We cannot fail," says Dr. Grandgent, "to note the distinctness of Dante's concepts, his clear-cut reasoning, his strict logic; but what impresses us most, perhaps, is his curiosity." This is analyzed carefully and revealingly, in the true scholar's best manner.

Another point of view is elaborated in Dante and His Influence, by Thomas Nelson Page (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00) which collects a series of Barbour-Page Foundation lectures. Not claiming to add anything new to Dante scholarship, Mr. Page wished simply "to present in succinct form a brief sketch of the life of the poet of poets and of the conditions amid which that life was cast." He was most interested in the Divine Comedy as an educative force; and the chapter dealing with Dante and his teaching is, perhaps, the most valuable part of a beautifully written book. "Among the benefits which Dante conferred on Italy and, indeed, on the world in his masterpiece was first, his dedication of his great powers to the teaching of the moral purpose of man's existence; and secondly, their application in the forms of beauty and majesty in which he clothed his great ideas; and

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thirdly, the medium and the manner in which he presented them." The volume offers a good American view of its subject.

A memorable essay by Dean Church, reprinted in *Dante and Other Essays* (New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00) might profitably be appended to the lectures. It is the work of an exceedingly able Victorian who weighs the criticisms of Dante which were rooted in the English nineteenth-century mind, and disposes of them generously and dispassionately. Present-day readers will find it a useful summary of the subject. "The greatness of Dante's work is not in its details," says the essay. "It is the greatness of a comprehensive and vast conception, sustaining without failure the trial of its long and hazardous execution, and fulfilling at its close the hope and promise of its beginning; like the greatness—which we watch in its course with anxious suspense, and look back upon it when it is secured by death, with deep admiration—of a perfect life."

Among the many little books which aim to give an introduction to the life and work of the Florentine master, Dante, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick (New Haven: Yale University Press. \$5.00) seems to us easily the best. Other volumes are heavier with research and speculation about difficult problems, but none says quite so well the words of illuminating comment which the new pilgrim to Dante longs to hear. Perhaps the chief reason for Mr. Sedgwick's success is his sincerity. Though he can narrate the factual circumstances graphically, he is concerned chiefly with outlining the noble ethical import of the *Divine Comedy*. "Dante," he says, "is the best medicine for minds diseased with scepticism, as to the value of righteousness." This orientation, thoroughly modern and—one suspects—relatively personal, makes possible the masterly chapter on Dante's intellectual preparation, in which there is a strong and refreshing undercurrent of mysticism. Still better, I think, is the chapter of commentary on the *Purgatorio*, written with fine poetic nobility and a sense of practical spiritual realities. Even though one detects, here and there in the book, a strident, dissatisfied note, Mr. Sedgwick's attractive little volume is almost a distillation of Dante.

A succinctly scholarly introduction which has deservedly won a great many readers is *Dante*, by Jefferson Butler Fletcher (New York: Henry Holt. \$1.00). The purpose being "to interpret Dante as far as possible from his own writings," the growth of the poet is keenly analyzed through a progressive comparison of the lesser poems and the *Divine Comedy*. It has seemed to Dr. Fletcher that understanding Dante is equivalent to familiarizing oneself with Dante's mystical view of life. "Systematic investigation," he says keenly, "from the standpoint of folklore as well as of conscious mysticism, of mediaeval number symbolism is still a desideratum." But without becoming tiresomely erudite, the little book deals more satisfactorily than anything else of its kind in English with the data of Dante's symbolism. The conclusion is, of course, a falling-off. Some might require a modernistic recipe for their assimilation of the *Divine Comedy*, but it seems hardly fitting that a scholar should stoop to supply it.

Dante, the Man and the Poet, by Mary Bradford Whiting (New York: D. Appleton. \$3.00) is exactly what the title indicates—a pleasantly written compendium of the facts about the great poet. Though the analysis of Dante's symbolism and ideas is a bit tenuous, this book will prove continuously helpful to readers who, though familiar with the poet's text, need to familiarize themselves with his person and his surroundings. Miss Whiting's book is valuable also for the series

of graceful and appropriate illustrations which beautify it. Here are the more important portraits of Dante, and photographic likenesses of the scenes now identified with his memory.

A Companion to Dante, by the great Swiss scholar, Scartazzini, is available in a fine English translation by A. J. Butler (New York: The Macmillan Company. \$5.00). This work is remarkable for the thoroughness with which it covers the field of Dante literature up until the time when it was written—1892—though it not infrequently ventures conclusions that seem dubious. Here the student will find adequate historical summaries; reliable biographical material, discussing all the questions of ancestry, personal fortunes, and relations with others; and concise schemata for the interpretation of the poems. Scartazzini was deeply interested in the lesser works of Dante, and his treatment of them is particularly valuable. All the leading aspects of the *Divine Comedy* are discussed, and especial attention is devoted to the interpretation of Beatrice. This is an admirable book to approach after a careful reading of some such briefer treatise as that by Mr. Sedgwick.

The translator of Scartazzini is the author of a compact manual, *Dante: His Times and His Work* (New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.40). It includes a careful exposition of the historical and cultural background against which the *Divine Comedy* was written, and summarizes the poem itself. There is no attempt to be original or very personal; but the work is so sagely and reverently done that the beginning student may reap more profit from it than he could from vastly more pretentious volumes. That Mr. Butler had the beginner constantly in mind, is proved by the section of "Helps" which really do what they profess to. His book may be considered a suitable prelude to the scholarly and widely appreciated *Dante Alighieri: His Life and Works*, by Paget Toynbee (London: Methuen).

Even the general reader of Dante will find it useful to read one or the other of the special studies which have been devoted to a consideration of more recondite problems. Among the best of these ever to have been written by an American is *The Symbolism of the Divine Comedy*, by Jefferson Butler Fletcher (New York: Columbia University Press. \$2.50). Dr. Fletcher deals here with certain aspects of the imagery used by the mystical writers to represent spiritual realities. "If the use of sensuous symbols was thus primarily to bring the supersensible home to creatures of sense," he writes, "yet in the handling of subtle and ingenious metaphysicians and mystics, it too often ceased to be illustrative and simplifying, and became—in almost a mathematical sense—an intricate and esoteric

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symbolic logic." His treatment is firm and informative, being especially fine in the interpretation of Ariadne's Crown. The chapter entitled *Three Blessed Ladies* does not wholly satisfy; and Catholics particularly will feel that the interpretation of Mary is far from adequate. Nevertheless, there is much real beauty here also, and the last section of the book—apparently a lecture—deals inspiringly with the *Comedy of Dante*, setting forth the relations between the man and his poem.

While Dr. Fletcher's subject-matter is symbolism, the import of Dante's *Conception of Justice*, by Allan H. Gilbert (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press. \$2.50) is predominately ethical. The idea here is to show that the concept of justice was a matter of primary importance to Dante. From what sources did he derive it? Mr. Gilbert turns to Saint Thomas's *Commentary on Ethics*, and correlates this, step by step, with the poems and prose of the Florentine seer. The relation is established with particular nicety in so far as the doctrine of natural law is concerned. It is impossible not to relish Mr. Gilbert's familiarity with the subject or his sincere sympathy with the authors he reads. But his schematization of the *Divine Comedy* seems to me of doubtful value. It is this: the *Inferno* deals with justice in the life of the wicked; the *Purgatorio* with justice in human suffering; and the *Paradiso* with the justice of variation in human talents. "Let every man employ well the talents he possesses," reads the conclusion. "Then life has for him all the possibilities which Dante, in his allegory, represents by the justly ordered kingdom of heaven." This view, though interesting and reasonable, seems to involve an unnecessary earthification of the *Divine Comedy*. It might be more correct to say that the great poet had in mind the saying of Christ about the quest of the kingdom of God and His justice. But however the individualisms of Mr. Gilbert's work may impress the reader, it is very good work, logically accomplished and adequately substantiated.

We might go on to enumerate other studies in number. The *Mystic Vision in the Grail Legend* and in the *Divine Comedy*, by L. A. Fisher, is an example of many monographs written to initiate the student into the mazes of mystical allegory. Helpful information concerning these aspects of Dante bibliography may be obtained from the librarians in charge of the larger Dante collections in the United States. It is a pleasure to end this rambling discussion of books with the following excerpt from a courteous letter signed by Asa Don Dickinson, librarian of the University of Pennsylvania: "We shall be glad to coöperate in extending the use of our collection to contestants for this prize, although it might be necessary to require the formality of introduction for those persons unknown to us who wish to use the most precious of our volumes."

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

The Pope, by Jean Carrère; translated by Arthur Chambers. New York. Henry Holt. \$3.50.

WRITING about Rome is a temptation hard to resist. After a year's residence, the present reviewer found it difficult to abstain from chronicling the Holy Year 1925. Luckily he abstained. For though Rome is old enough and complex enough to admit of each visitor finding some new point of aesthetic or spiritual appreciation in it, it takes a Goethe to do it lyrical justice after such a peremptory acquaintance. For twenty years Jean Carrère held out against the temptation. Much of that time he spent in Rome as correspondent of the *Paris Temps*. It was not until the

occasion of the Holy Year beginning on Christmas Eve, 1924, that he followed the suggestion of his master, the eminent French Catholic novelist and psychologist, Paul Bourget, and published the present "synthetical essay on the two Romes."

The book is called *The Pope*, though it is really about Rome and the "Roman question" throughout the ages. Gradually the "city of Peter" across the Tiber from the heights of the Pincio has drawn the French author toward it. Rome is unique in her varied attractions. Each civilization has passed and left its mark. Pagan temples and Roman walls are as much in evidence as renaissance palaces and gorgeous baroque basilicas. The feudal castles of the middle-ages are skirted by modern electric street-cars. The Yellow Tiber runs beneath the railway, past the tomb of a Roman emperor, the stronghold of the Popes, the Castel Sant' Angelo, to flow beneath a bridge built by order of a consul of the Roman republic. And over all, on ancient bridge as on the modern tramcar, runs the legend S. P. Q. R.—*Senatus Populusque Romanus*. "O Rome! thou art a world," wrote Goethe. What the German poet wrote was true and is true forever, but not in the way that he understood it.

"Why is Rome eternal?" asks Monsieur Carrère. He finds the answer in the presence of Peter. This is the most important aspect of the essay. The author has clearly and systematically made out the case for Rome as the capital of Christianity against those illustrious though mistaken writers—among their number are Gibbon, Taine, and Nietzsche—who claim that the spirit of Rome and the Roman empire has survived, if not in spite of, then, at least, unaided by and apart from the presence of the Vicar of Christ in the city. The truth is, that Rome is what she is today because the first Pope Peter settled there. Everyone is ready to admit the "metropolitan" position of Rome among the cities of the world, but the majority are unaware of the spiritual foundation of its position. "It is our city, the city of all western peoples; it is the truly infinite city; the ideal homeland of all who wish to see man's work reaching toward eternity."

With the coming of Peter, Rome became the centre of Christianity. The Church was Catholic; it was apostolic; it became Roman. The Church was of no nation. The Pope was the Vicar of Christ. What ruler had the right to rule Rome? So there came the temporal power. Perhaps in the days of Constantine, certainly by the time of Charlemagne, the Prince-Pope began to rule Rome and the surrounding country.

The expansion of the Church and the state of civilization made the temporal power a necessity. "A Pope in Rome at a time of mediaeval barbarity, with an emperor or king in the same town, . . . would have made Peter the servant of Caesar, which would have been the very negation of Peter's mission." It is with the struggle of Peter and Caesar that the first part of this essay is taken up. The author has realized an important truth. Peter is, in the nature of things, the enemy of Caesar; the one stands for an "idea"; the other is the personification of "force"; Caesar, as he rises to the apex of his power, is drawn, as if by some magnet, toward Rome, where stands Peter ready to oppose human arrogance, and sometimes destined to triumph as at Canossa, sometimes to suffer as at the hands of Charles V's German mercenaries, but always sure to rise again triumphant, even though without domain, in a strength that is not of the flesh, but of the spirit.

The main truth of Jean Carrère's contention is incontestable. Yet, his argument is inclined to be abstract and it

would take many more chapters, if not books, to follow out his contention in its application to the historical instances. "Caesar," according to Carrère, "is not necessarily an emperor or necessarily Germanic. He is there wherever force tries to subjugate the spirit and dominate the world, be it east or west of the Rhine, north or south of the Alps." That leaves the author a wide choice of opponents for Peter. He makes out a good case with his examples, and even manages to overcome the apparent difficulty of Napoleon III, admitted friend of the Holy See. True, "it was the inevitable destiny of all the Caesars, hereditary or children of fortune, that prompted their desire to seize for their material aggrandizement the supreme and imponderable strength represented by the power of Peter." Yet, there were occasions on which the descendant of Peter allied himself with worldly powers, "Most Catholic Majesties" and "Defenders of the Faith," and it would have strengthened Jean Carrère's case to have dealt with them at some length. He covers himself, however, by claiming that his book is no more than a "synthetical essay" and not an analytical history.

In 1871, with the inroad of General Cadorna's troops into Rome through the Porta Pia breach, the temporal power of the Papacy came to an end and the Roman question was born. The last half of the essay deals with the Roman question in a manner that is at once sympathetic and historically accurate. Anybody attempting to solve the Roman question finds himself on the horns of a most perfect dilemma: in the light of reason and by all the laws of nationality and the principles of self-determination, the city of Rome should be the capital of the kingdom of United Italy; the tradition of a thousand years and more has placed the seat of the Papacy on the tomb of its founder and the prestige of the Sovereign Pontiff as head of the universal Church is incompatible with his subjection to any racial human sovereign. The temporal power is gone in its old form forever and the Church is the richer for its loss, but the principle still remains. In one of the most admirably succinct passages in the whole book the author expounds its theoretical significance:

"The temporal power of the Pope, as I have already shown, several times in this work, does not rest on conquest or chance like all the others, having no aim beyond itself. It is not an end, but a means; it is not a possession, but a condition. It is the very condition of spiritual power, and this spiritual power, in the eyes of the Pope and in the eyes of the whole Church, is the only essential and indestructible thing that exists on earth. If you are not a Catholic, you have a right to dispute spiritual power and temporal power, and one through the other as you please, but, if you are a Catholic, you have not the right to refuse to recognize a truth which is proved and confirmed by the whole history of Europe for the last 2,000 years. The condition of spiritual power is the absolute independence of the Pope, and the condition of this independence is the sovereign possession of a terrestrial domain, allowing the Pope complete freedom from the jurisdiction and supervision of any other power on earth."

The "Law of Guarantees," which has been in force and unrecognized by the Popes since 1871, does not assure this independence. The present solution of voluntary imprisonment of the Holy Father leaves the question in abeyance, save in moments of crisis and excitement. Yet there can be no gain-saying the unsatisfactory nature of the present condition, as well from the Quirinal as from the Vatican point of view. The modern Caesar, in the person of Benito Mussolini, is

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said to be desirous of becoming the political champion of the Holy See and her representative in the Council of the Nations. But, first, there must be a settlement of the Roman question; and, secondly, Mussolini must cease to be the champion of force; he must not be Caesar or he becomes the inveterate enemy of Peter.

The conclusion of a book, which is decidedly Catholic in its sentiment and international in its conception of historical justice, is that the Roman question can only be solved by the admission of the papal sovereignty, be this over no larger an area than the Vatican Gardens.

MARTYN HEMPHILL.

Digging for Lost African Gods, by Count Byron Khun de Prorok. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$6.00.

ENTHUSIASM is always infectious and the devotion of the Count de Prorok to the antiquities and archaeological developments of North Africa bears fruit in a splendid volume of effort and achievement that will warm the hearts of the readers of his *Digging for Lost African Gods*.

Carthage, the great centre of a Phoenician civilization, rivaling that of Rome to its own destruction, is the beginning and end of these excavations, discoveries, and explorations of the northern Sahara. Count de Prorok's first discovery of Jules Renault lying ill in a deserted dug-out, originally an old Roman cistern, where he was spending the last fifteen years of a life that had started on the operatic stage, in devotion to Carthaginian history and archaeology, has all the elements of true romance.

Of the old Carthaginians, feared and hated by the outer world, who distrusted their fides Punica, their dubious private contracts and public "scraps of paper," Count de Prorok says: "These people invented business, as it is understood today. It is now beyond doubt that they were the first real explorers, the first to organize overseas trade, and they were the first bankers. They invented contracts and bills of exchange. Probably they had a stock market or clearing house. Carthage issued leather money of representative value, which was currency through her dependencies, anticipating modern economists in the matter of paper money."

Christianity in Carthage came at the end of the second century, followed by a persecution more merciless than the horrors of Italy itself. The amphitheatre of Carthage was the scene of the martyrdoms of noble women like Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicitas. The Bishop Saint Cyprian was beheaded, and at Cirta, Lambessa, and Utica hundreds of Christians perished in the fiery furnaces. It was in the Baths of Gargilius, now under excavation in Carthage, that Saint Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo, made his famous onslaught on the schismatical Donatists at the Council of A. D. 311.

The lifelong researches of Père Delattre, and of the distinguished Syrian archaeologist, the Abbé Chabot, are gratefully recognized. The general narrative of the book is pleasantly varied with accounts of the daily experiences of the excavators in North Africa: the visits of interested scholars, and interesting patrons whose donations enable the workers to proceed.

The French clergy figure, as is entirely proper, prominently on the scene, as we are in the last home of the great Cardinal Lavigerie, whose White Fathers are the guardians of his tomb, with the two representative figures of the negro with broken chains and the Bedouin holding symbolical sheaves

of produce. On a neighboring hill stand the shrine and tomb of the Crusader Saint Louis of France.

Count de Prorok gives a graphic account of the unearthing of the sanctuary of Tanit, the cruel goddess of the Carthaginians. He takes us with him to the dead cities of Africa, buried and half-lost in the sands of the Sahara—Gigthis, Djirba, and Mahdia on the coast, where the divers have brought up priceless sculptures, of columns, vases, and architectural details from the finest periods of Greek art, treasure-trove from a Roman galley halted in its work of spoliation and sunken by a storm before it reached its home ports of Italy.

We are led in the Count's expeditions through the Golden Cities, Sbeitla, Timgad, Khamissa Bulla Regia, Chemton, and Dougga. The stories of the excavations at Utica, the parent city, are given in detail: all of which and more make of Count de Prorok's *Digging for Lost African Gods* a fascinating reading of adventure and history, and a valuable record of epoch-making explorations and excavations.

THOMAS WALSH.

Great Short Stories of the World, collected by Barrett H. Clark and Maxim Lieber. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. \$5.00.

INDUSTRY and a desire to satisfy the modern craving for enlightenment about the short story have guided Mr. Clark and Mr. Lieber in making the large anthology now offered to the public. Narratives from ancient and modern literatures are grouped with little or no regard for the generally accepted theoretical requirements for the short-story form. There is something from the Bible, from Petronius, from the *Panchatantra*, prefixed to a more or less heterogeneous collection of yarns by modern and contemporary authors. Naturally there is no critic who could declare himself fully satisfied with the result.

The absence of a definite criterion of selection makes inevitable the constant questions, Why this? Why not that? In the selections from German literature, for instance, Droste-Hülshoff's famous classic, *Die Judenbuche*, is omitted, while a definitely second-rate story by Sudermann finds a place. And if the reason was a desire to represent the moderns, why was not a more representative story chosen from the wealth of contemporary German narratives?

It seems also, turning momentarily to the English writers, that the complete exclusion of Kipling can be justified only on the ground of personal feeling—a dangerous standard for any anthology. In the case of France, nothing more bizarre can be imagined by the present reviewer than the preference for Zola's *The Fairy Amoureuse*, to the exclusion of Barbey d'Aureville, Flaubert, and Paul Bourget. The American section seems to have been created within range of Mr. Mencken's mighty voice. Any reader who should choose these narratives as a representative picking from the rich American short-story literature would merely be badly fooled.

But though one might go on indefinitely finding fault with what Mr. Clark and Mr. Lieber have decreed ought to go into their anthology, the fact remains that the massive volume is crammed with attractive narratives, only a comparative few of which—like Theodore Dreiser's *The Lost Phoebe*—are impossibly dull. It might be added, by way of a parting benediction, that the work of translation from foreign languages has usually been done with considerable skill.

T. C.

THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"Sinclair Lewis," remarked Dr. Angelicus from the depths of his paper, "has refused the Pulitzer prize of \$1,000 for the year's best novel, received the gift of a new hat, and inaugurated a Sunday-school class for ministers in Kansas City, all in one breath. Now here is a writer of versatile interests, which include literary ethics, men's millinery, and the message of the pulpit. He is, apparently, not absorbed in only one idea."

"He may not be absorbed in only one idea," considered Britannicus, "but he is undoubtedly absorbed in two, which you have not mentioned."

"Which are?" queried the Doctor.

"One is Sinclair, and the other is Lewis," replied Britannicus, "if I may paraphrase a remark once made about another author."

"Tell me about the hat," begged Miss Brynmorian. "I know women writers whose entire literary inspiration depends on their luck in obtaining becoming millinery. My friend, Miss Pansy Ravenelle, the poetess, declares that the muse deserts her unless she possesses a pretty purple hat—and the novelist, Andromeda Bloomer, depends entirely for her inspiration on a crimson felt chapeau. Perhaps Mr. Lewis is also influenced by this important factor. What is his new hat like?"

"It has the largest head-size of any hat ever manufactured," replied Angelicus, "which seems to be the only detail the press is particularly interested in."

"It should, of course, have a hat-band and streamers," said Britannicus, "and on the band, in letters of gold, should be S. S. Main Street, since that is the ship that launched him into fame."

"Was his refusal of the Pulitzer prize based on his desire to step modestly aside and let some other author, who needed it more than he, receive it?" asked Miss Brynmorian in an innocent voice.

"We are speaking of Sinclair Lewis," reminded the Doctor, gravely.

"Nevertheless, it seems too bad not to have him receive *something*," objected Miss Brynmorian, "since the committee voted him worthy of an award. Haven't they any other prizes to give?"

"There still remains the booby prize," commented Britannicus.

"Sunday," remarked Dr. Angelicus, "must be a slow day for the ministers in Kansas City. I suppose there really wasn't anything for them to do on the seventh day except attend Mr. Lewis's Sunday-school class. I presume they close the churches on Sunday."

"Where was the Sunday-school class held?" inquired Miss Brynmorian.

"In the Ambassador Hotel there," replied Angelicus. "Kansas City is growing very fashionable."

"Well, there was, if you remember, a fashionable christening held not long ago in New York, at the Plaza Hotel," said Britannicus, "and it would almost seem as though, with the spread of luxurious hostelrys throughout the country, the churches were not much needed any more."

"There was," Dr. Angelicus continued, referring to his paper, "more or less secrecy about the meetings of Mr. Lewis's class, which were attended by about eighteen or twenty min-

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isters. The Reverend Bert Fiske, pastor of the Federated church at Ottawa, Kansas, says ministers from Lutheran, Christian, Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Unitarian, and Episcopal churches attended, as well as a Jewish rabbi. 'You're a fine bunch,' the minister says the novelist told them. 'You get up and preach things that neither you nor your congregations believe.'"

"He was hitting at the Baptists," declared Britannicus, "who in their recent convention held in Houston, Texas, condemned all beauty contests and bathing revues. How could they really be sincere in denouncing such worthy national customs which every year bring to the attention of the appreciative, beauty-loving public the feminine flower of the land, and fitly honor it?"

"It is evident, Britannicus," remarked Dr. Angelicus rather severely, "that you are not a good Baptist."

"Well, when I've seen some bathing beauties," retorted Britannicus, with a reminiscent gleam in his eye, "I've at least believed in total immersion."

—THE LIBRARIAN.

(The title-page and index for Volume III of *The Commonweal* are now ready, and will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume III in leather or in cloth, information regarding which will be supplied on application to *The Commonweal*.)

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